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SEPPEL:

OR THE

BURNING OF THE
SYNAGOGUE AT MUNICH



GUSTAV NIERITZ.







SEPPEL:
OR THE BURNING OF THE SYNAGOGUE
AT MUNICH.





SEPPEL AND THE TRABANT KOCHLER ON THE RIVER BANK.—*p. 120.*

SEPPEL:

OR

*THE BURNING OF THE SYNAGOGUE
AT MUNICH.*

BY

GUSTAV NIERITZ,

Author of "Busy Hands and Patient Hearts," &c.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.



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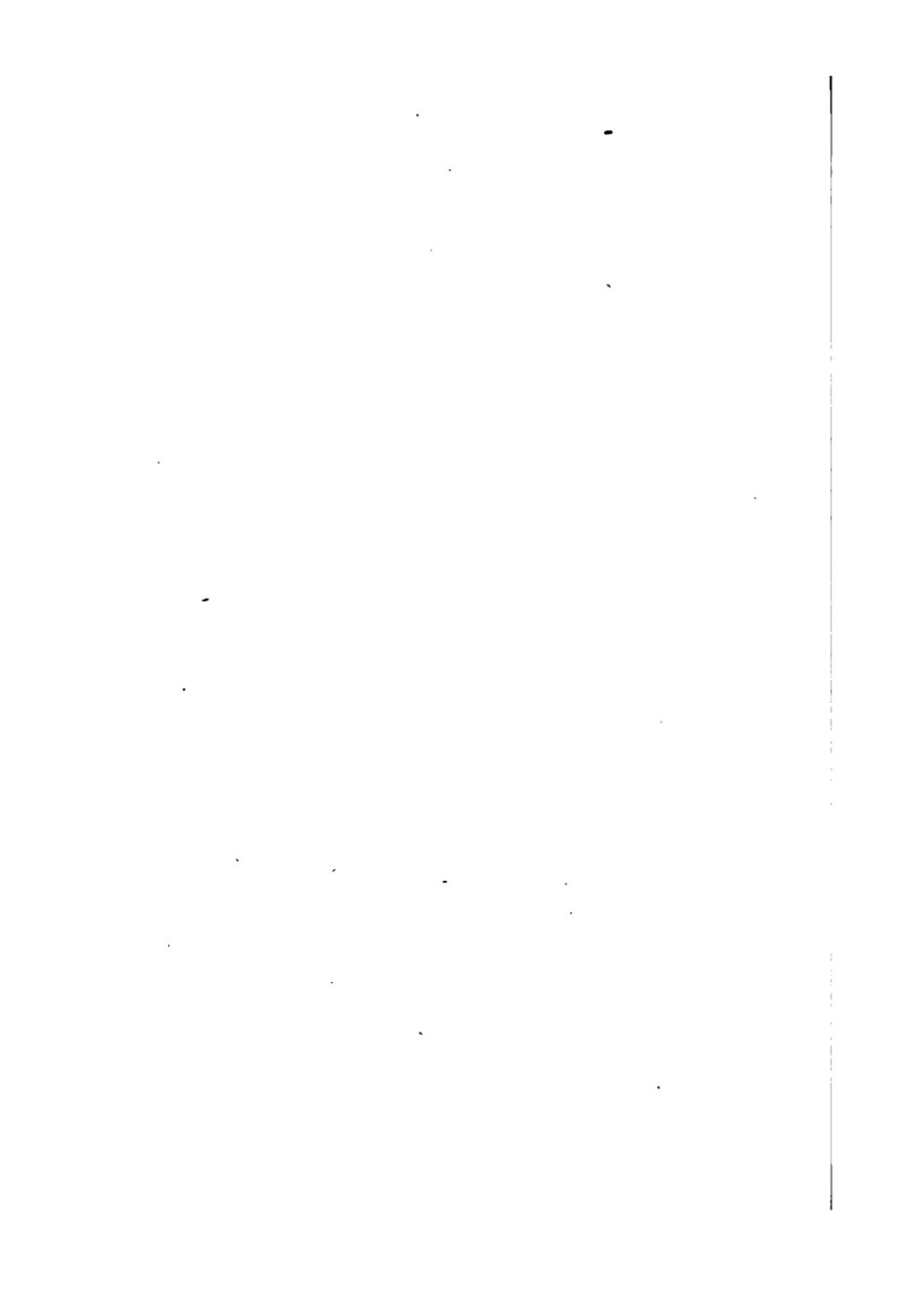
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CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE				
I.	DANGER AND DELIVERANCE	1		
II.	ENMITY AND OPPRESSION	13		
III.	A FOREST ADVENTURE...	33		
IV.	THE TIME OF MOURNING	50		
V.	THE TRABANT AND HIS SISTER	...		62		
VI.	GREAT DISQUIET	71	
VII.	THE JEWS' SABBATH	86	
VIII.	THE INVOLUNTARY LISTENER...	...		100		
IX.	CONFFLICT BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL	114				
X.	THE SUPPLICANT	125	
XI.	POPULAR FURY	138
XII.	THE BURNING OF THE SYNAGOGUE	155				
XIII.	CONCLUSION	164





CHAPTER I.

Danger and Deliverance.

AT an early hour on a fine day in autumn, a young boy about eight years of age was passing along the corn-market at Munich. Although the morning was fresh and cool, his arms and feet were bare; but evidently he did not suffer from his scanty clothing; his little plump cheeks were rosy and healthy, and his laughing blue eyes betokened gaiety and content. He carried a coarse wicker-basket, in which he was collecting the grains of corn plentifully strewn around, in company with

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CONTENTS.

CHAP.

I. DANGER AND DELIVERANCE	1
II. ENMITY AND OPPRESSION	2
III. A FOREST ADVENTURE	3
IV. THE TIME OF MOURNING	4
V. THE TRABANT AND HIS SISTER	5
VI. GREAT DISQUIET	6
VII. THE JEWS' SABBATH	7
VIII. THE INVOLUNTARY LISTENER	8
IX. CONFLICT BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL	9
X. THE SUPPLICANT	10
XI. POPULAR FURY	11
XII. THE BURNING OF THE SYNAGOGUE	12
XIII. CONCLUSION	13

numerous sparrows assembled for the same purpose. As it did not happen to be market-day they were allowed to continue their employment without interruption. From time to time the child regarded his basket with satisfaction, as it gradually filled up to the brim.

Presently he heard a woman's shrill voice call out to him, 'Seppel! Seppel!' Raising his eyes, he saw a vendor of grain beckoning to him, at a little distance. She was seated in a capacious barrel, one side of which was open. Hastening up to her, she asked him to look after her stores whilst she ran to Vokel's brewery. "I shall be back in an instant," she said, and left her seat, of which Seppel took possession. Pleased with his new occupation, he looked at the numerous sacks around him, and felt proud that their contents should be confided to his care. He saw millet, yellow as gold, grey oatmeal, barley, flour of different qualities, peas, lentils, haricots, and other kinds of grain, of

the names of which he was ignorant. The woman had left a small money-box also in his charge, filled with silver and copper coins, such as had never before gladdened his eyes. He did not venture to inspect them, but seated himself comfortably on her soft cushion, resting his little feet on the staves of the barrel.

Frau Siebert, to whom this stall belonged, was, no doubt, enjoying her glass of beer at Vokel's, for she remained there a very long time. Seppel was not anxious for her return, glad of the opportunity of gazing at the lofty marble column in front of him, which was surmounted by a well-sculptured group, representing the Virgin with the infant Jesus. "Oh, if I only could possess the golden aureole round the Infant's head," he said to himself, "I should be richer than Frau Siebert, notwithstanding all her money in that little box ! Oh, should I not jump for joy!"

The poor boy jumped sooner than he

expected. By some sudden and violent concussion and impulsion from without the barrel was upset, the sacks were dispersed pell-mell, and their contents scattered in all directions. Seppel was thrown forcibly to the ground, the barrel being on the top of him. He did not at all comprehend what had happened. So absorbed had he been castle-building that he did not notice the tumult ever increasing around him, nor remark that people were rushing across the market with screams of terror, seeking a place of safety. Frau Siebert from the door of the brewery saw all that occurred. In vain she called out, "Seppel! Seppel, save yourself!" By his fall he was expiating his want of attention to her concerns.

This is what had occurred. Two butcher boys, as they were driving a sturdy bull before them to the slaughter-house on the banks of the Isar, had held the rope by which it was secured so carelessly that sud-

denly the animal, terrified by a noise in the street, violently resisted further progress, and escaped from their hands ; he then made furious onslaughts on all within his reach, now throwing up his head, and now lowering it. First he upset a milkwoman, who uttered piercing shrieks ; then a poor boy was tossed in the air ; further on, a horse attached to a cart ran off ; in fact, all along the road the animal excited the greatest consternation. Followed by his youthful conductors, who sought to repossess themselves of the rope, the animal, unable to disentangle himself from it, became more and more enraged, and arrived in the corn-market exactly in the direction of the barrel wherein Seppel was seated. His first attack upset the barrel ; the second laid the astonished boy prostrate ; he was about to be tossed in the air, when a man suddenly faced the ungovernable animal, and giving him some sharp blows across the eyes, he hung upon his horns with all his strength

and all his weight, which caused the animal to turn from Seppel to defend himself. Notwithstanding the most desperate efforts, the bull could not shake himself free from his new enemy: the man, never letting go his hold, was sometimes raised high up in the air, and sometimes brought down to the ground, and thus dexterously maintained his grasp without uttering a single word.

The crowd from a distance, contemplating the fierce struggle going on, whilst expressing well-merited admiration for the man engaged in such a dangerous contest, betrayed great anxiety for the result. Soon the bull was obliged to yield, for the butcher boys coming up were again able to seize the rope which previously had slipped out of their hands.

Thus the conflict terminated, and all danger was at an end. The excited mob hurried to the spot, loud in their praise of Seppel's liberator and preserver. The applause they would have rendered, however,

died away on their lips when they perceived that he was—a Jew! He departed meekly and quietly through the crowd, who became silent, and at once turned their attention to Seppel and to the vanquished animal. They found Seppel lying amongst the scattered sacks of grain. When they raised him they ascertained that he had only received a few contusions, which, with the sudden fright, had stupefied him for the moment. Many hands were employed dusting off the flour with which he was covered. Frau Siebert paid dearly for her glass of beer. She first ran after the butcher boys, claiming compensation for the loss their carelessness had occasioned her; but then remembering her money-box, she reflected that what immediately concerned her was to try and collect together the coins scattered about by the accident. She returned hastily to her stall, round which many suspicious characters had gathered.

The crowd gradually dispersed; a few idle

lads only remained ; for in the medieval times of which we write young people were not occupied at school as they are now. On the contrary, every opportunity of amusing themselves was sought to beguile time ; thus they had already besieged the door and windows of the slaughter-house, where the runaway bull was about to be killed. A man approached the troop of children, and said harshly to them, " O ye generation of foolish idlers ! have you nothing better to do than to loiter here open-mouthed ? Have you never yet seen an animal slaughtered ? "

" Oh, yes, Master Filter ; but this animal is not to be knocked down in the ordinary way, but to have his throat cut after the manner of the Jews, which one does not see every day."

Behind the butchers a Jew with a long beard now appeared, who, until then, had kept aloof. He drew a well-sharpened knife from its sheaf, whilst the motley crew of children outside were joining in derisive

vociferations, “ Moses forbade to strike, to pierce, or to knock down ; he ordained to cut—cut—cut ! ” It was even so : the Jew was himself repeating the very words the children mockingly shouted.

After the Jewish butcher had examined his victim with attention, the word *kauscher** escaped from his lips ; but before the preliminaries were concluded a voice was heard emphatically saying, “ Abinadab, the bull is not *kauscher*. Do you not know that on its way here its horns struck against several persons, and tossed some up in the air ? ” Everyone now turned towards the speaker, who proved to be no other than the Jew Eli to whom little Seppel owed his life.

The butcher, a little put out, replied, “ No one told me a single word of it ; it was not well of you to withhold that fact ; you would have caused me to sin against our law.”

“ Did you not yourself, Jew, join in declaring that the animal was *kauscher* ? ” said

* *Kauscher* —perfect, excellent.

the master-butcher angrily. "What does it signify that the bull was enraged and attacked people with his horns? Is that *our* fault? And what difference will it make to the meat?"

"Christian!" replied the Jew, "Moses gave us this commandment: 'If an ox hurt a man or woman with his horns, it shall certainly be stoned to death, his flesh shall not be eaten.'"^{*}

"By St. Benno!" cried Master Filter, "such a rule is as singular as are the Jews. They cannot blame the animal for having acted as he did; should we not also seek to defend ourselves if we were led away to be slaughtered? Besides, an animal cannot be responsible for his actions; since reason fails him, he cannot distinguish between good and evil. We Christians should not

* *Exodus* xxi. 28: "If an ox gore a man, or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit."

be so stupid as to stone a bull to death because he had hurt some one with his horns, and to throw away his flesh when it is wholesome: besides, from what has been told me, this bull did not attack any Jew. Whence then arise your scruples?"

"Christian, or Jew, it is the same," replied Abinadab, "therefore you must acknowledge that it is not only when our own interests are concerned that we observe the precepts of the law."

Thereupon he detached the rope and waited until a more satisfactory victim should be brought up.

Just then a woman hastily entering seized Filter by the arm, saying angrily, "Whilst you are here gossiping your adopted son is struggling with death—"

"Woman!" cried Filter, "is that true?"

"Your Seppel has been trampled to death, crushed, thrown up in the air by an enraged bull," said the woman without taking breath.

"The corn-market is all covered with the

blood of the unfortunate child, who was the favourite of all Munich."

This exaggerated story produced a general burst of laughter.

"Oh! Oh! Frau Siebert," cried the butcher boys. "Master Filter, be tranquil! your Seppel lives, his limbs are whole; but it is a positive fact that you owe his life to the kindness of the Jew Eli with whom you were just now disputing."

After having heard the particulars of what had occurred, Filter sought out the Jew to thank him for having saved the life of his adopted child, but he had already disappeared; whereupon Filter went to look for Seppel, who had been so providentially rescued from a violent death.





CHAPTER II.

Enmity and Oppression.

N the fourth storey of a dilapidated house, in the Israelites' quarter at Munich, lived the Jew Eli with his numerous family. His apartment looked on a court facing the north, so that not a single ray of sunshine relieved its wretched and dirty condition. In the middle of the room stood a large worm-eaten table, covered with old clothes of every description ; squalid garments were thrown in a heap between a high cupboard, blackened with smoke, and a rickety bed—the only bed the

poor family possessed. Wooden stools were placed along the dusky walls and round the table, their number corresponding with that of the family.

Near a casement with rounded panes set in lead, obscured by time and neglect, a young girl of about twelve years of age was seated, carefully cleaning the rusty buttons of an old velvet waistcoat. Her eyelids were swollen and inflamed, the dust arising from the chalk she was using increased her suffering; occasionally she leaned her head against the window in pain, and then renewed her work with increased diligence. At her feet stood an oblong basket, set on two pieces of wood, which served as a cradle. In it slept a child whose pallor was that of death. The young girl rocked the cradle now and then with her foot; a younger sister was in another room, busy furbishing up some garments, which she brought in at intervals.

“Zirl,” she said, seeing tears flowing down

her face, "let me polish those buttons—you are suffering."

"Judith, you know according to the Law we must obey our parents: father has given me this work, and I shall soon have finished it."

Presently she rose, and held up the waistcoat to the light; the buttons glistened brightly. She then took up a brush to remove the chalk still remaining on the velvet.

A woman with a large bundle under her arm now entered the room, whom, it was easy to perceive, sorrow and poverty had prematurely aged. The numerous steps she had ascended had rendered her breathless. "Does little Esther sleep?" she asked, approaching the cradle. She kissed the pale cheek of the infant, and retired to her room to change her threadbare garments for others in a still more tattered state, and then repaired to the kitchen to prepare their meagre dinner.

Eli returned home with unwonted circumspection. Mounting the stairs rapidly, he rushed into his room in extreme agitation, threw his old hat on the floor, tore off his waistcoat, causing the buttons to fly asunder. The muscles of his face worked convulsively, his limbs trembled, his lips vainly essayed to give utterance to his feelings. Perceiving a saucer of powdered chalk on the table, he took it up and threw its contents over his head, whereupon a cloud of dust fell on his clothes; but this act seemed not to suffice as an outward exhibition of his grief.

Zirl was distressed upon observing the velvet waistcoat, which she had just cleaned with so much care, quite spoilt in her father's hands. At length he said, "Perish the day that I was born! Why did I not die in coming into the world? When shall I know repose?"

These words, spoken in a loud tone of voice, woke up little Esther, who, at the un-

usual noise, cried with alarm; this brought her mother to her side. She asked her husband the cause of his anger.

At first there was no response. Eli continued to pour forth invectives and imprecations. At last he exclaimed, "Oh, Ruth, Ruth ! listen to what has happened. As I passed Count Bittrick's palace he let his cane drop ; it had a handsome gold handle. I was concerned to see it on the ground, all over mud. He called out, 'Jew, buy this cane ! it is so dirty I do not care to carry it.' Hoping to gain something by the transaction, I picked it up, cleaned it, especially the gold part, so as to be able to judge of its value. This was precisely what my gentleman wanted. He asked an exorbitant price, and when I tried to reduce it, he seized the cane from me and walked off. Our parleying was indeed a bargaining for gold and receiving mud for my pains. After that, in Valteline street, two men called to me from the door of a house; 'Jew ! will you

buy a small quantity of silk ?' They gave me a parcel. I opened first one paper and then another, and another ; what was my disgust to find a piece of pork ! I saw it with loathing, and immediately let it fall. At the same moment two sharp blows were applied to my face, and the men, with insult and mockery, drove me away. This incident, however, was nothing compared with the ill-treatment I experienced from the trumpeter of our gracious prince's guard. You must know that he had borrowed three florins of me, for which he had made over, as security, the silver mouthpiece of his trumpet. To-day the money was due. I took the note and the security in my pocket, and found him in the company of two of his comrades. I made known my mission with the humility always expected from us poor Jews, and waited for an answer. 'Stay a while, stupid fellow,' he said, 'till I give you a tune ; but I must first have the mouthpiece to play it properly,'

whereupon all the three attacking me, snatched both the mouthpiece and the note from my pocket. The trumpeter's two companions held me fast, whilst he blew such a loud blast in my ear that I am deafened by it to this moment. 'Now we are quits,' said he laughing; and that he might not hear any more of this affair, he forced me, with the aid of his comrades, to swallow the note which they had torn in pieces. To whom could I complain of this infamous conduct, if not to the great marshal of the court? I sought him, and was exposed to additional mockery and insults, receiving blows and kicks from the servants. At length I was able to reach the marshal, just as he was going to church. Scarcely had I stated my case, and spoken of their conduct, than he interrupted me, and remarked in a severe tone, 'Who ordered you, Jew, to make a loan to a reckless musician; above all, on a pledge which you ought to know did not belong to him,

but to our gracious Elector. If you have been defrauded it is just what you deserve.' I had borne the insults of the varlets whilst seeking his presence ; this censure was all the justice I obtained. Oh, Ruth ! to lose three florins, upon which we could have lived one whole month !"

And then Eli recommenced plucking out his hair and his beard. Wife and children joined in lamentation when they heard of the contumely which had been heaped upon him.

Suddenly a slow and solemn voice was heard, and as by enchantment, profound silence ensued : "Eli, my son Eli ! has the injustice of Christians transformed thee into a feeble woman ?"

These words produced an instantaneous and marvellous effect. The violent trembling of Eli's limbs, the quivering of the muscles of his face, the rage which glistened in his eyes, subsided. With his head drooping he reverentially approached a recess, where a

Jew, whose hair was as white as snow, was seated in the only comfortable armchair they possessed. His forehead was furrowed by age, a long silvery beard flowed down to his breast ; the old man's eyes, overhung by long white eyebrows, were hidden by his closed lids. Eli knelt before him with deep emotion. "Oh, my father !" he said, while deep sobs interrupted his speech, "they spat on your son, they insulted him, they kicked and robbed him."

"Our fathers languished in Egyptian bondage four hundred and thirty years," replied the old man, "and when they sighed in their anguish, their cry ascended to the Lord of Sabaoth ; and the Lord heard their cry, and remembered the covenant that he had made with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob, and God regarded the children of Israel, and gave heed to the voice of their complaint. Eli, my son, as the Lord delivered them by the hand of Moses, so will He deliver us by the Messiah whom He has promised shall appear."

“But,” said Eli, with sadness, “it is more than one thousand three hundred years that the Lord has turned away His face from His people, and it is hard to believe that the Egyptians tormented our fathers more than the Christians torment us now. Instead of the tribute the pagan Romans exacted from our forefathers the Christians now impose sixty times as much; and whilst they are allowed to employ themselves in various industries, we are only permitted to engage in insignificant traffic. My soul is heavy within me—ah, Lord, until when?”

“A thousand years are but as a day in the Lord’s sight,” replied the old man; “and who better than He can know what we merit? Console thyself, my son, with Job, who said, ‘a just and righteous man is not mocked.’”

“Father,” said Eli, “they not only mocked me, they struck and robbed me, so that my children must suffer hunger.”

“The eyes of the wicked shall be con-

sumed," said the old man. "To God, who is the fountain of wisdom and strength, appertains good counsel; it is He who multiplies nations, and also causes them to perish; He spreads tribes at His will, and gathers them together again. He will one day judge our oppressors, the Christians."

"But shall we live till that time?" said Eli, discouraged and not easily persuaded.

The old man did not appear to have heard the question; he was silent, and took no further notice of what was passing around him. Eli, accustomed to his father's fits of moodiness, rose from his knees, and, turning towards his wife, inquired, "Well, Ruth, hast thou been more fortunate in thy affairs than I have been?"

"I think so," she said, joyfully; "I have got a cavalry cloak, certainly worth three and a half florins, for one florin and forty kreutzers."

Eli helped his wife to unfold the cloak.

Holding it against the light, he exclaimed with dismay, "Ruth, what hast thou done? Thou hast been grossly deceived; the cloth is full of holes, and stained with spots of grease."

Ruth was forced to acknowledge that her husband was right.

"Woman, where were thine eyes, generally so piercing to discover the defects of articles sold to thee?"

"Oh, the deceitful Trabant!" exclaimed Ruth; "it was for that he sold me his cloak in a dark room, where the cloth seemed to have a fine gloss." She now examined it more closely: "The rogue has cleaned it with beer, to renovate it."

Misfortunes appeared to happen all together. Her eye fell on the waistcoat which Eli had torn in his irrepressible rage. Again it was in the hands of the indefatigable Zirl, who, uncomplainingly, was endeavouring to remedy the injury her father had caused. Now that he had become calmer, when con-



scious of the damage his anger had wrought, it so distressed him that he was on the point of recommencing the work of destruction on the garments he was wearing. A fresh incident, however, prevented him.

The door opened, and two Jewish boys entered. The eldest, with blood trickling down his face, which was heated and marked with recent blows, led a younger brother, who was sickly and deformed in his limbs, to a low bench near the window.

Instead of pitying the poor boy so ill-treated, Eli seized him angrily by the hair, and shaking him violently, said, "Have you been fighting again with the Christian children? Did I not desire you to allow them to insult you rather than to return a blow?"

"Yes, father; but it is written in the Law, 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' I have heard that in the synagogue."

“But hast thou not also heard that ‘ravens will pluck out the eyes of him who mocks his father, and who despises the teaching of his mother, and the young eagles shall devour them.’ Boy! are you a scribe that you seek to explain the Law? It is not you, but the judge only who can decide when to exact ‘an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’”

“Father, where shall we find such a judge?” asked the boy, firmly.

“Above there!” said Eli, pointing to heaven with solemn dignity. “He is a mighty and a jealous God, who will not allow those who transgress His law to go unpunished.”

The boy melted into tears. “Father!” said he, sobbing, “it is well; I will allow them to trample me underfoot, I will fight no more! But when the wicked Christian children insult and torment poor weak Jacob, it is difficult for me to put up with it without retaliating.”

“What was it, Asher?” inquired his mother. “Tell me what happened.”

“I had led Jacob to a sunny place in the herb-market; he was quietly seated, his back supported by the side of a shop. I was picking up pins, rags, and such like objects; always watching over him. Suddenly, four boys, perceiving my brother, cried out, ‘Look! there is a toad!’ and began throwing stones at him. Finding that, notwithstanding my complaints, they continued to annoy poor Jacob, I attacked all four of them, and should have overcome them, but a man ran out to their assistance, who helped them to beat me.”

Eli, casting a look of anguish up to heaven, exclaimed, “Lord, when wilt thou cease to be angry with us because of our transgressions? When wilt Thou cause Thy face to shine upon us? When wilt Thou re-establish the kingdom of Israel, so that we may rest in peace, and sit under our vine and fig-trees?”

A knock at the door put an end to the lamentations of the afflicted family. Master Filter, accompanied by little Seppel, made his appearance. Recognising Eli, he joyfully said, "Ah, yes! it is really you. I have sought a long time to learn your name, and to find your house. You have reason to think ill of me, for instead of thanking you for preserving the life of my adopted son, I have appeared negligent; but I hope you will believe, though I am an enemy to your creed, that I must personally, by your bravery and kindness to Seppel, ever remain your friend. I am glad to press the hand which so successfully blinded the eyes of the furious animal that he could no longer see my Seppel to toss him in the air. By St. Benno! great injustice is done to the Jews when it is denied that they possess courage. Of all those who were present, you only ventured to attack the bull. Seppel! look stedfastly at this man. He is a Jew, it is true, and has a terrible long beard, but he has saved your life, so give him your hand heartily."



Seppel did so, opening his large blue eyes. He had noticed Asher with his face covered with blood and scars ; but when he perceived the old man seated in the recess, motionless as a statue, he uttered a cry of astonishment, and pointed with his finger to the strange apparition.

“ What, what is that ? ” said Filter, with curiosity. Is it Methusaleh, Noah, or Father Abraham ? Is he made of wood or stone ? Good gracious ! he moves.”

“ It is Solomon, my father,” said Eli, with filial reverence.” His eyes are dimmed with age, like those of Isaac, so that he can no longer recognise his children.”

“ How does he employ his time, in such a dark corner ? ” asked Filter, compassionately.

“ He sometimes gives attention to our affairs and to our troubles,” said Eli. “ The promises of God sustain him, and are all in all to him.”

“ Do you know,” said Filter, “ that the danger my Seppel incurred was the means

of making him quite rich ? Presents have poured in on every side ; and you, Jew, what have you received for the courage you displayed ? ”

Eli was embarrassed. With bitter feelings he remembered the gold-headed cane, the piece of pork, the trumpeter of the guard, the mantle full of holes, which his wife had brought home ; he gazed at Asher who had been so ill treated, and could not reply.

Filter continued, “ If you had not been a Jew, I believe you would have received a substantial reward for having saved Seppel’s life. He is a general favourite. Well, Seppel ! you would like to share your gifts with your deliverer ? ”

The little boy took some peaches from a basket, which he offered to each of Eli’s children, who received them without venturing to taste them ; and many inquisitive looks followed the young donor, when he timidly placed a fine bunch of grapes on

the knees of the old man. Eli's eyes were suffused with tears. His emotion increased when Seppel deposited his basket on the table, with the remainder of its contents, amongst which were some coins, which he begged Eli to accept. Eli extended his right hand over Seppel's curly head, and said with much agitation, " May the Lord bless thee ! "

" My Seppel will soon come to see you again," said Filter, as he departed with the boy.

Judith, Asher, and Jacob were delighted with the luscious fruit given them, which as yet they had not had the opportunity of tasting ; but seeing Zirl leave her work, and give her peach to her grandfather, her brothers and sister followed her example.

" It is well," said Eli ; " children as you are, you may yet eat such fine fruit more than once in your lives ; but for your old grandfather, it is not likely that he will do so."

Thus Seppel's gratitude cast a ray of cheering light in the darkened abode of the Jewish family, and somewhat lessened the grief caused by the bitter trials they had that day endured.





CHAPTER III.

A Forest Adventure.

AT the close of a dreary November day, as night approached, the moon was struggling to appear through the dense fog which overspread the land; a few brilliant stars, only occasionally discovered, sought to bear her company; but the dark forest, a few miles distant from Wasserburg, remained enveloped in impenetrable gloom. All at once the red glare of a resinous torch was seen near its entrance. He who carried it was followed by a cavalier on horseback, attended by two of his retinue,

laden with the spoils of a successful day's sport.

"Hatzieh," said the cavalier, "this cold penetrates my very marrow. Well, when we return home I shall the better relish a good supper and a bottle of Niernsteiner." As they advanced further, he suddenly called out, "Hans! what seest thou against yonder fir-tree?"

Hans held his torch aloft that its light might illumine a more extended space. "Where, gracious lord? I see nothing."

The knight raised himself on his stirrup. "By my troth," he cried, "it is a man! Quick, Hans! hold up your torch higher still." Whilst Hans obeyed, his master advanced a few paces to the right within the forest, and called out loudly, "Who is there?"

"A man," replied a feeble voice.

"I see that," said the knight; "but there are different sorts of men,—of what sort are you?"

“I am poor and unhappy.”

“Well,” said the knight, “poverty need not be a reproach ; all men cannot be rich. But what are you doing here at this time of night, out in this piercing cold ?”

“Dying !” replied the dark form, with appalling composure, as he leant against the trunk of a sturdy fir-tree.

“Dying ?” said the knight, with astonishment ; “that may well happen if you persist in passing the night here. But why should you wish to die ? You seem to be still young. Tell me how is it that we find you here, and why do you not seek shelter from this bitter weather ?”

“I lost myself in the forest,” replied the stranger ; “besides which no one would desire to take me under his roof.”

“Why not ? Are you a thief, a murderer, an outlaw ? If you are not any of these, I promise to give you an asylum in my house.”

“An outlaw ! I *am* an outlaw, but not

by any fault of mine. You will recall your offer when you know who I am."

"Who are you, then?" asked the knight, surprised and impatient.

"A Jew," replied the stranger firmly; "not by my own free choice, as you are not a Christian by your free choice. It was my misfortune to be born a Jew; and I have therefore been an outlaw from my very birth."

"A Jew!" replied the knight.

"Yes, a Jew," said the stranger with emphasis, "and I am not ashamed to acknowledge it; and now you will not disquiet yourself any more about me, and you will leave me here to await death."

"I am a Christian," replied the knight with gentleness, "and I wish to show you that I do not bear that name by chance only, or solely by my birth, as you said of yourself just now; but that I endeavour to do the will of my Lord, our Divine Master. Follow me!"

The Jew, already half dead with cold, was incapable of moving. When they attempted to lead him he fell from exhaustion. Without wasting precious moments by further parleying, the knight Von Landau alighted from his horse, and with the assistance of his followers, placed the poor benumbed Jew upon it, desiring the torch-bearer to support him on one side, whilst he held him up on the other. Thus, like a good Samaritan, the noble knight proceeded to his castle, which was reached in about half an hour.

After he had changed his hunting attire and put on a comfortable fur-lined robe, he repaired to the dining-room, which was warm and well lit up, and where his usual companion was already awaiting his return, who, after a cordial greeting, said, "You have apparently brought a guest with you," pointing to the third plate which had been laid on the table—"perhaps one of your acquaintance about here?"

"Not exactly, Sir Prior," answered Von Landau, with an ambiguous smile. "It is a very particular sort of guest you will see ; and it is to you that I owe his presence here."

"I cannot divine who it can be: you quite excite my curiosity."

"You would have difficulty in guessing, for it is a Jew whom I found quite benumbed, having lost his way in the forest : remembering your good precepts, and in accordance with them, I brought him home with me."

"You have done well, Von Landau," said the Prior. "He who fears and loves God follows the path of justice, of mercy, of benevolence."

The Jew, who had been much revived by the warm garments and the good wine given him, was now ushered in. He meekly took his seat at the table, which was abundantly supplied with food. He was a young man of good presence, about thirty years of

age. They first partook of some wine soup, after which a dish of ham was handed to the guests. Remarking that the Jew coloured up, Von Landau reproached his servant : " Louis, you simpleton, have you never heard that Jews are horrified at the sight of pork ? Quickly offer him another dish ! "

The Prior, seeing what had passed, addressed the Jew with much kindness in his manner. " My dear brother," he said, " I trust that as a reasonable being you will not be offended if I ask you a simple question. Tell me what is the cause of the aversion the Jews have to pork ? "

" Moses forbids us to eat pork," replied the Jew, " for it is the flesh of an unclean animal."

" I know that well," said the Prior calmly, " but according to my way of thinking that prohibition applied to circumstances which no longer exist. The warmer climate of Palestine, and the uncleanliness to which

from long years of slavery in Egypt the Jews had given way, produced skin diseases, and particularly that terrible malady leprosy. In such countries the use of pork would have been improper, therefore it was interdicted by Moses, whom I also respect as one of the most faithful servants of the Most High, and one of the greatest men who ever lived. But we find ourselves now under quite a different state of things ; I do not therefore see why the use of pork in our days should be improper, or contrary to the will of God. We know, and we believe everything created by God is good, and not to be rejected, but that all should be received with thankfulness."

"Of that I cannot judge," answered the stranger. "We are taught from our infancy that if we eat the flesh of swine we shall perish."

"But you see in us a proof to the contrary," said Von Landau (resolutely attacking his portion of ham) ; "however, it would

be useless to try and persuade you that you are in error, because you have already a disgust for pork, as we, for example, have for the flesh of dogs or cats, though some nations regard them as the most delicate of viands. All depends on habit, on custom. Try this haunch of venison, you will find it excellent."

"We never eat the flesh that is close to the hip-bone," replied the Jew, excusing himself.

"Then I fear I am not yet at the end of your scruples. Well, try the breast of veal; it does credit to the talents of my cook."

"Neither is it permitted me to eat that," said the Jew.

"And why not? it is neither pork nor the haunch?"

"But that roast meat is covered with butter."

"And what if it be?"

"It is written in our Law, 'thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.'"^{*}

* Exodus xxiii. 19.

“ But how does that precept apply to this roast meat ? ”

“ Butter is prepared with cows’ milk, and the calf is the young of the cow.”

“ Oh, St. Cyprien ! that is a very out-of-the-way interpretation. First of all, the calf is not put to death, nor stifled with butter ; it is killed first, and then butter is poured over it.”

“ It is all the same. Our Rabbis explain the passage as I have said ; that is why we never can eat roast veal basted with butter.”

“ We may well recall to mind,” remarked the Prior seriously, “ what Christ our Master said of the scribes and Pharisees : ‘ they bind heavy burthens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders ; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.’ ” *

“ I thought,” said Von Landau, “ that my table was not badly supplied, and that it boasted some variety, and to-day I see that

* Matthew xxiii. 4.

a poor Jew cannot find anything to eat at it ! What then can I offer you ? I am afraid you may again decline."

" Pray excuse me," replied the Jew, " this excellent bread will satisfy my appetite."

" As you please," said Von Landau ; " but at all events take some wine with it, that you may have something strengthening. Where are you going to, Jew ? " he asked, seeing him about to quit his seat.

" Allow me, gracious sir," he said, stammering ; " I desired to go out to wash my hands."

" But your hands are clean."

" Our Law forbids us to eat bread without first washing our hands."

" Not when they are already clean ? "

" The Law makes no difference."

" One sees also in this," said the Prior, " that the letter kills, but that the spirit revivifies.* During their bondage in Egypt

* 2 Cor. iii. 6 : " For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

the Jewish people had little or no time for the frequent ablutions which are so necessary for the preservation of health; thus they became accustomed to the greatest uncleanness. Moses could not overcome this odious habit without instituting acts of purification as a part of their religion, and assigning both the time and the place when they should be performed. But what was requisite for those wandering tribes, we of a later civilization voluntarily perform from love of cleanliness."

"But what would you do if you could not find any water to wash your hands?" said Von Landau.

"I should have to endure hunger."

"Even though you should die of hunger?"

"Yes, if I purposed to fulfil the Law."

"Go," said the knight kindly; "do all that you consider necessary before eating a bit of bread."

When the Jew returned the Prior asked

him, "Would you dare eat this bread if you were celebrating the Passover?"

"God forbid!" exclaimed the Jew; "at that time we may eat only unleavened bread."

"Another burthen," said the Prior.

"Alas! these are not the heaviest that we have to bear," said the stranger. He raised the wine-glass to his lips to hide the tear glistening in his eye.

Respecting his grief, his two companions remained silent. After a short pause, Von Landau said, "Tell me, my friend, what is your name? I do not like to call you Jew."

"My name is Jonathan."

"Well, Jonathan, you are still young and robust, and you do not appear deficient in sense; tell me, I pray you, then, why you had given way to such despair when we found you in the forest? You did not move even when you saw us approaching. I verily believe that you would have been there still if I had not accosted you."

“Certainly,” said Jonathan, with a mournful air.

“But why? for youth is ever attached to life.”

“Gracious sir, I owe you much gratitude, but would that I had died there rather than have been brought here. Do not take offence,” he said, observing his host’s countenance darken, “but listen to my sad story; you will be able to judge of the depth of my grief and the extent of my misfortune. I had two brothers, both much older than myself, and both were married. The eldest had acquired wealth and property with his wife; the younger, on the contrary, lived in poverty. Notwithstanding that, it is the latter who takes care of our aged father with the greatest devotion; for the wife of my eldest brother is a bad step-daughter—she is envious and avaricious; she would not allow her husband to dispose of a single kreutzer to help my father. Well, she had a poor relation who acted as her servant—

a rose of Jericho ! a star in the clouded sky. I served and worked seven years for her as Jacob did for Rachel. God helped my little commercial transactions, and now that I looked forward to conduct Sara to my home as a dear wife, my eldest brother dies, and my hope is altogether annihilated."

"But I do not understand why," said Von Landau, compassionately.

"I will tell you. Our Law commands that when a man dies without children, his brother should marry his widow: as my other brother has already a wife and children, it is my duty to marry my eldest brother's widow. Thus, obliged to abandon my beloved Sara, my betrothed, I was on my way to Munich, whence a letter was sent to summon me to fulfil the Law. Oh, I went so happily formerly to see my Sara, but now my unwilling feet dislike traversing the road which leads to the accomplishment of my painful destiny."

"It is the most terrible law in the world," said the master of the house.

"We inmates of the cloister are obliged to conform to pretty much the same law," remarked the Prior. "We cannot have any other spouse but our holy Church; the decision depends on our own free choice; but sometimes in special cases the Pope can release us from our vows, and grant dispensation."

"How rejoiced I am to be a Christian!" said Von Landau heartily: "not to have any scruples about my food or drink, nor to think of the new moons nor ablutions nor any other of your strange customs. I now comprehend in all its extent the value of the divine religion I profess. Although I, too, have a burthen of affliction to bear, which regards my dearest affections, but which my religion tends to soothe and not to exasperate. However, poor Jonathan, do not lose heart, all may yet be well with you and according to your wish. Take rest and

enjoy peace here awhile; and if at any later period you should require assistance, you must inform me. Remember that Von Landau will help you in every way he can."





CHAPTER IV.

The Time of Mourning.

WHEN Seppel revisited Eli's family he found their little room very dark, although the sun had been some hours risen. They were all assembled at their breakfast of water-soup. To his surprise they were not seated round the table as usual, but on the hard and dirty floor: a little lamp was placed by the side of the smoking soup-tureen. Seppel observed with increased astonishment that their clothes were torn in many places. Zirl, with red, inflamed eyes and pale face was there also, a true image of patient

endurance. Poor Jacob, whose crooked legs in such a position caused him discomfort, moaned whilst conveying his wooden spoon to his mouth. Besides this, the faces and hands of the whole family were positively dirty ; the young girls' black hair floated loosely over their necks. All this Seppel remarked on the threshold, whilst waiting until the family had finished their scanty meal. After the customary long prayer had been said, the old grandfather was taken back to his usual corner in the recess, whence however his armchair had disappeared, and also all the other chairs and benches. When Zirl had resumed her place near the window, Seppel approached her and said, " But why were you all on the floor, Zirl ? I hope you have not been obliged to sell your chairs ? "

" No," said Zirl, wiping her tearful eyes, " the seats are in the kitchen, heaped one upon the other ; but we could not make use of them because we are in mourning."

“ But see, Zirl! ashes have fallen on the heads of your father and grandfather, tell them of it that they may shake them off. And their clothes are torn, they must have caught them in some hook ; why does not your mother, who is always so industrious, repair them ? ”

“ All you remark has been purposely done, because we are in mourning,” she repeated. “ Our uncle Barach (my father’s brother) was interred the day before yesterday, and it is on that account that ashes are strewn on my parents’ heads, and that their garments are rent.”

“ But that seems a very singular mode of showing grief,” replied Seppel ; “ to destroy their clothes, to powder their head with cinders, and to lie on the floor ! See how dirty it has made you.”

“ I know it well,” said Zirl sadly, “ but it cannot be otherwise.”

“ Zirl,” said Seppel joyously, “ guess now what I have brought you.”

“ Is it something for the eyes ? ”

“ Well guessed. This small phial contains a precious lotion with which you must bathe your eyes, and it will soothe them. Hold out your hand, and I will pour some into it, which you can at once apply to them.”

“ I dare not do so, dear Seppel,” replied Zirl ; “ being in mourning we can neither wash nor comb our hair, nor even cut our nails.”

“ Fie ! ” cried Seppel involuntarily, “ that is a detestable mourning. I should be sorry to be in your place ! That is why all your faces look so brown and sallow. But it can’t be forbidden you to moisten your eyes with this lotion. It is not a common water, nor ordinary washing, it is simply a remedy.”

“ It is the same,” said Zirl ; “ we must obey the Law.”

“ But you expose yourself to lose your sight altogether,” said Seppel, “ and then

you will have another kind of mourning to endure."

"I must submit to all that may result from it," said the young girl, with firmness.

"I might then have saved myself the trouble of procuring it," said Seppel, somewhat piqued. "Well, there is the lotion, do what you like with it."

A young man who was a Jew now entered the room, which induced Seppel to remain a little longer. The new comer embraced Eli in silence, then threw himself at the feet of old Solomon, whose hands he kissed, shedding tears. "My father," he said with grief, "thy son Jonathan greets thee."

The old man half opened his weak eyes, laid his right hand on Jonathan's bent head, and said, "My son, the Lord has called away thy brother, and thou wilt fill his place."

"It is his wicked wife who tormented him until he died," he said, with some exaspera-

tion. "I expect the same lot if I am to obey the Law."

"Thou must do so," replied the old man, calmly. "The anger of Jehovah already weighs on His people; wouldst thou by disobedience augment it? Cursed is he who does not fulfil all the commandments of the Law."

"And my Sara! Oh how wretched I am! Why did I not die in the place of my brother Barach?"

"Such a wish might be better uttered by me than by you," replied Solomon. "I would rather be in Abraham's bosom than witness the forsaking of the Law by my children."

"I will obey, my father," said Jonathan, after a violent struggle with his feelings.

"And now, my father, bless thy son."

A ray of joy illuminated Solomon's furrowed face.

"May the Lord bless thee like Ephraim and Manasseh!" he said in a firm voice.

“ Mayst thou flourish like a tree planted by a running stream ! May thy posterity possess the gate of thine enemies ! Amen.”

“ My father,” said Jonathan, placing a small bag of money on the old man’s knees, “ this is a sum I have gained by labour, and with difficulty, during seven years, in the hope of marrying Sara. Deborah thy daughter-in-law is rich enough to take me without money. By laying out this little sum thou mayst comfort thy remaining days.”

“ Come here, my son, and embrace me,” said the aged man with emotion, “ for thou hast refreshed my soul. May the Lord, as a reward, grant thee His choicest blessings ! May they who bless thee be blessed, and they who curse thee be accursed !”

Jonathan rose up and wiped away his tears. All regarded the young man with compassion and respect. He went towards the window, and continued looking through its dim panes, full of thought.

Presently the door opened, and a young and handsome Jewess hurriedly entered the room. She went up to Eli's wife, and threw herself on her neck sobbing. "Deborah has driven me away," she said, "because I will not marry the old and wicked Joas. Ah, never can I forget my Jonathan. I would rather die than be false to him!"

At the sound of that well-known voice Jonathan rapidly turned his head. When he perceived his young betrothed in the arms of his sister-in-law, he was overwhelmed with anguish; his heart was ready to break; he pressed his hands to his side as though to moderate its throbings.

When Sara saw Jonathan, a cry of intermingled joy and grief escaped her. She disengaged herself from the arms of Ruth, and advancing a step or two, was about to embrace him, and then paused, and seemed rooted to the spot. Jonathan, who reciprocated her feelings, experienced the same joy, the same anguish. His arm dropped

languidly ; he cast a mournful look on her, and said, " Thou knowest the Law, the terrible Law ! "

" I know it," said the young girl, turning away to depart.

" I shall obey it," said Jonathan, struggling with strong feelings which overpowered him. " Adieu, Sara ! Adieu for ever. Be happier than I can be. I shall soon follow my poor brother to the grave ! "

Sara wrung her hands despairingly.

" Adieu then for the last time, my Sara ! " And he gave his hand to the young girl, who had become as pale as death. At the very moment that Sara was placing her trembling hand in Jonathan's the sound of a person breathing heavily whilst ascending the stairs was heard.

" Deborah is coming ; listen ! " she exclaimed, and escaped into a side room. Jonathan, with lips apart, waiting what should ensue, kept his eyes fixed on the door. An old and hideous Jewess entered,

stumbling over the threshold. Her grey hairs strayed from under a cap which had seen its best days ; her capacious mouth was devoid of teeth ; her throat, of an ashen hue, displayed an immense goitre, which rendered her respiration difficult and painful. Instead of the usual salutations, she gave vent to torrents of abuse against Sara, who had, she said, run away from her house, where she had been only too comfortable and happy. Then assuming a gay, youthful manner, she exclaimed, " Oh, I see my dear betrothed is here ! How glad I am to meet you, dear Jonathan. I hope your affairs are flourishing, and that you have not empty hands, whilst entering into a contract with a poor widow, for I have the most pressing want of your aid and support. My loved Barach left the entire weight of business on my shoulders. He did not know how to make our debtors pay us what they owed. When I sent him out for that purpose, he continually came back.

to me without the money he ought to have brought. The pains I took to teach him how to compel a debtor to open his purse were useless. 'You must follow him like his shadow,' I said; 'accompany him everywhere. Keep close at his heels. If he venture out of his house, let his first look fall upon you. If he go to pray, wait for him at the door of the church. If in the early morning he should appear at his window, let him see you betimes in the street. Be incessant in entreaties for payment; allow yourself to be insulted, spit upon, trampled under foot; creep like a worm before him, provided that you obtain the money at last!' However, Barach did not heed my instructions, but preferred frequenting the brewery, which I often forced him to leave by a good box on the ear. You will conduct yourself better, my good Jonathan, I hope, or we shall soon be ruined."

Here Seppel passed noiselessly behind the shrew and left the room. She had ex-

hausted his patience. The scene he had witnessed made a great impression on him, He felt that not for all the treasures of the world would he exchange his lot with poor Jonathan. On descending the stairs he was followed by Asher, who coincided in his opinion. They bent their steps to the synagogue where the feast of Purim was being celebrated.





CHAPTER V.

The Trabant and his Sister.

TN the afternoon of St. Thomas's day Frau Siebert was seated in her room by the side of a well-heated stove. She had just finished a good meal with some glasses of beer, which had rendered her sleepy, and was indulging in a loud yawn, when the door of her room opened, and a servant, gaily dressed in a bright-coloured corset and a cap adorned with silver ribbons, entered. On her arm a pretty child reposed, covered with a large white veil. "Aunt," said she softly to the vendor of grain, who languidly opened her

heavy eyelids, "you can do me a great favour—a favour which will cost you nothing. You must know that my master and mistress have gone to spend the day with the chancellor, so I have come with little Adalbert to pay you a visit. The sharp winter air makes him sleep soundly; he will not readily wake. Now do just let me place him on your bed, whilst I pass a little half-hour next door at the inn, where they are to have a dance. Such an opportunity as this a servant seldom finds; do let me profit by it, dear aunt."

Frau Siebert nodded assent, yawned, and again closed her eyes, whilst the giddy servant laid down the infant on her aunt's bed, spreading the veil over him, and then ran off to enjoy the amusement she had promised herself. The old woman and the child continued to sleep soundly. "The little half-hour" had passed, and the nurse had not returned. It was already getting dusk, so that the further end of the room

where the bed was placed, with the little sleeper on it, was scarcely discernible.

A violent rap at the door startled Frau Siebert out of her slumber. Before she was thoroughly awake a tall, stalwart man in uniform stood before her, his military accoutrements and spurs jingling as he advanced. He accosted her in a loud and abrupt tone: "Aunt, I am come to show you the new cloak I have bought with my savings; the old one was full of holes like a sieve; I could not wear it any longer, notwithstanding which I got a Jewess to take it off my hands for one florin forty kreutzers, which helped me to buy the cloth for this one. The captain of my company ought really to be more generous; he scarcely ever doles anything out to me except my pay. He has often promised to better my condition, but has not kept his word. Let him beware; for if he offend me I may make him repent it! I know something very much against him, by which secret I have

him in my power. But really, aunt, your stove is like a fiery volcano. If it were but as warm out of doors I might have spared myself the expense of buying this cloak ;" saying which, he took it off his shoulders, and flung it heavily on the bed ; then, unbuckling his sword-belt, he continued, "I am quite weary of a military life, and should like now to enjoy a little rest : to marry, and to have a home of my own." Thus saying, he threw his sword and belt on his cloak and loosened his coat. "Have you lately seen that giddy sister of mine? She is better satisfied with her place, I hope, than I am with mine. She is nurse to my captain's child ; but he is not under the same deep obligation to her that he is to me."

"I saw her about an hour ago," Frau Siebert replied, without moving from her seat behind the stove; "she hardly remained a minute, but ran off to some dance. She is very thoughtless."

“Have you any little kittens there?” the Trabant abruptly said.

“I hope not,” cried Frau Siebert; “but why do you ask?”

“Because I heard some strange sound in that direction.”

Thunderstruck, she hurried to the side of the bed, all at once recollecting the child confided to her care. “Jesu Maria!” she exclaimed, in dire alarm, when she noticed the heavy cloak spread over the infant, with the sword on the top of it. Her trembling hands could hardly remove them. Snatching them off, as also the veil, she ran with the child to the window to examine it. She nearly let it fall from her arms when she perceived that the little innocent’s face had become blue, and that it was stiff and motionless: it had been suffocated! The cries, reproaches, and lamentations uttered by the unfortunate woman conveyed to the astonished Trabant the knowledge of what had just happened, and of which he had

been the unconscious cause. He retained sufficient presence of mind to try various methods in the hope of recalling the child to life. With a sharp penknife he opened a vein in its arm; seeing that no blood flowed, he tried to operate on the child's foot. But all was useless. Inexorable Death does not render back his prey! At the same moment the nurse entered the room, heated with dancing and out of breath. She became as pale as a corpse when informed of the calamity which had befallen them, and which would not have occurred had she not relinquished her charge into another's keeping. She reproached herself with her passion for dancing, inveighed against the negligence of her aunt and the carelessness of her brother. But the poor little Adalbert did not the less remain *dead*.

“An only child,” she said, wringing her hands; “the pride and the hope of my masters! Ah! never dare I present myself before them. Are there no means

to save me, unfortunate creature that I am?"

Here the Trabant, who had been fitfully pacing up and down the room, approached his sister, and, placing his large hand on her mouth, said, "The best way to save me and yourself, is to hold your tongue; for if you continue this clamour we are lost! The disaster has happened, and we cannot alter it."

These words were evidently so true that Nanny moderated all outward expression of grief, but she wept silently over the poor infant. Matters could not remain as they were. The Trabant took up the lifeless body, and giving the thickly wadded quilt on which she had brought it to his sister, told her to cover it over with the veil, and to go directly to her master's house as though nothing had happened. "When you enter the courtyard, begin to cry and scream, and say that three bearded men attacked you, and snatched the child away from you. The

story will appear the more likely, for the odium will be thrown on the Jews. They are already detested by the captain, who very lately scornfully refused their request to modify an order which was very oppressive to them. The theft of the child, which you must pretend has happened, will appear an act of revenge on their part, and will be readily believed."

"But what can be done with the body of dear little Adalbert?" asked Nanny, weeping bitterly.

"That will be my affair; I will dispose of it. But you must do what I tell you, and be careful not to change a word of what you say, if you do not wish to cause the ruin of us all."

Nanny made a violent effort to restrain her tears, took up the little empty quilted bed in her arms, over which her brother, in an agitated manner, spread the veil, and departed.

The Trabant threw the fatal cloak over

his shoulders, and under it he concealed the poor child, taking a rough farewell of his aunt, who was overwhelmed with grief at this unlooked for calamity.





CHAPTER VI.

Great Disquiet.

HE next day was Friday. Early in the morning Eli's wife went out to buy provisions necessary for two days, Saturday being a day of rest for the Jews. The old cloak, for which, as we know, she had paid too much, served her to wrap her various purchases in. She placed some loaves of bread, a joint of meat, cabbages, and turnips, in the midst of some clothes she had just bought, and returned home more pleased than usual with her acquisitions. She found her children

mending, cleaning, furbishing, and improving old garments, with a view to their better sale. Zirl helped her mother to put down her large heavy bundle. Her husband soon entered in a state of extreme agitation : "Have you heard," he said, "that the enemies of Israel have again opened their aspic throats to destroy us ? A report has spread through the town that the nurse of the captain's child yesterday evening was attacked at the entrance of their house by three men, who took it away from her by force ; they declare that the ruffians were some of our people. On my way here I have encountered nothing but fierce, menacing looks ; the people collect in groups, and are uttering threats and imprecations against us. O my God ! spare us the terrible persecution from which our forefathers suffered so grievously from the Christians, jealous of their gains."

Hearing this deplorable news, the satisfaction Ruth had felt changed to conster-

nation. With a deep sigh, she busied herself unfolding the bulky cloak, and taking from it, one after the other, the old clothes, in the midst of which she had deposited the provisions.

"We are obliged to conceal from the Christians every cabbage, every loaf of bread we possess," said Ruth, with a saddened voice, whilst continuing her occupation ; "they envy us the very bread we eat, and speak of our great riches, when they see us carrying a little portion of meat home."

Here Ruth ceased to speak, uttered a piercing scream, and fell senseless on the floor. All those around the poor woman seemed stupefied, paralysed ; not one could help to raise her from the ground. Their haggard, bewildered eyes were fixed on the table. In the middle of the cloak lay a dead child ! Was it a delusion of the evil one, that this frightful, this ghastly phantom was presented to their view ? It remained

there, palpable to human sight, to human touch.

Eli, as though to convince himself of the reality of the image, laid his hand upon it and became speechless, struck by its marble coldness. His children, though always pallid from the close atmosphere in which they lived, were now blanched with fear, their lips livid, their eyes immovable and stone-like: they resembled spectres, and gave a still more impressive aspect to the scene. The old grandfather in vain demanded explanation of what was passing. At length Eli, violently seizing his senseless wife, cried out, "Ruth, Ruth, what does this mean? 'Speak, Ruth! Unfortunate woman, whence didst thou bring that dead child?'"

Ruth gave no reply. Zirl alone possessed sufficient presence of mind to throw some water on her poor mother's face. During this interval, the hair and clothes of Eli had to bear the brunt of the misery he felt; and his old father tore his beard and his

garments in like manner when he heard what had happened.

When Eli became somewhat calmer the examination of the child's linen afforded them fresh cause for terror and despair. "The little skirts and swaddling clothes are marked, A. von L." he stammered. "There is no doubt that this is the child, Adalbert von Landau, who was stolen last night, the captain's only son. Ruth! confess to me whence didst thou bring that little corpse?"

Ruth, who had slightly recovered, replied in a feeble voice, "God is my witness that I know nothing whatever about it. After buying my provisions I bargained for a doublet and an under waistcoat; during that time I left my packet for an instant; but when or by whom that child was placed amongst my purchases I cannot comprehend."

"It is the work of Beelzebub!" murmured Eli, in an undertone: "he wishes to exter-

minate us from the earth. Oh, my father, what advice can you give to your wretched, wretched son ?”

For the first time for many years past tears flowed fast down the old man's face. With a trembling accent he spoke : “ Ah, Lord, chastise us not in Thy displeasure. Succour me, O Eternal One, for my limbs fail me, my strength is gone ! O Eternal One, until when ?”

Eli listened in silence to the words of the prophet-king repeated by his father, who, after a moment of deep thought, said, “ My son Eli, hasten to acquaint the Rabbi Zabulon of our great trial. It is not we only who will suffer should they suspect us of having caused the death of this child, but all the people of Israel will suffer with us. We will conform to whatever the wisdom of Zabulon shall decide ; he will, no doubt, consult the elders ; but whilst thou art gone we must conceal the child, lest any one coming in unawares should discover

it." Eli acquiesced in the order he had just received without making the slightest observation. It was not without secret terror that he took up the poor infant's corpse and carried it into the kitchen, where he hid it behind some logs of firewood.

At the end of an hour, which appeared to them of extreme duration, Eli returned.

"What opinion did the worthy Zabulon express?" said the old man, with a calm voice.

"He did not deem it right to take the matter wholly upon himself, therefore he convoked the elders in council," replied Eli, wiping the cold perspiration from his brow. "They were unanimous in deciding that as the Christians are our inveterate enemies, we should not be believed if we stated the simple truth. They recommend us to cause the poor child to disappear clandestinely this very night, and that the most absolute silence on this lamentable affair should be imposed on every member of our family."

"You must submit to the Rabbi's order; what mean you to do?"

"They advise me to consign the child to the waters of the Isar."

Solomon dissentingly shook his head. "Would it be a matter of indifference to you that the corpse of *your* child should be uncovered on the earth, exposed to be tormented by evil spirits?" he asked.

It was determined therefore to inter it in the Christian burying-ground that very night.

The succeeding hours passed in anxious and almost unbroken silence. Ruth was so completely exhausted and borne down with grief that she sought her couch. Eli was plunged in profound reflection. The children were talking together in a low tone of the dreadful event; they had not noticed that the window-panes were covered with a thick coating of ice. Their mother and their grandfather seemed benumbed with cold, and grief. "Come with me, Asher," said

Zirl, "we will go into the kitchen and take some wood to make a fire in the stove ; we will shut our eyes and then we shall not see the evil spirits if they be there."

"Stay," said Asher, plucking up courage, "I will go alone without shutting my eyes ; a boy of my age ought not to fear ; but I grieve that the poor child, although a Christian, lies there, instead of being covered up in his own soft warm bed."

This feeling, shared by the whole family, made them for a moment forget their own misery. Eli, when he heard his children talking of the infant, approached them, and in a solemn tone said, "My children, behold your aged and venerable grandfather, whom the Lord has permitted to live eighty years. Do you wish that his white hairs should descend into the grave reddened with blood ? Look at your excellent mother, who has reared you with deep affection, and with such constant anxiety. Do you wish that I, your father,

who have often allowed myself to be trampled on for your sakes, that I might be able to supply your wants—do you wish that I should undergo the ignominious death of a malefactor?"

"No, no, no, father!" they all with one voice replied.

"It is well," said Eli, with emotion. "You must, therefore, never allow the name of that child to pass your lips by night or by day. Dispel from your minds the memory of this event. Be silent as the grave when you are interrogated about it, if you do not wish our heads to fall under the executioner's axe."

"Father!" said Asher, "were they to tear me limb from limb, to throw me into boiling oil, to torture me as the cruel Antiochus did our forefathers, I would never betray you!"

Whilst Asher was making these promises, his pale, wan face became animated, his eyes sparkled, and it was easy to believe that this boy, who had not uttered a complaint

when ill-treated by Christian children, would suffer in every way rather than betray his parents.

The lagging evening hours passed slowly; Eli's anguish and disquiet increased as night advanced. He often approached the window, gazing into the darkness without. At length when eleven o'clock struck, he entered the kitchen, taking a small lamp with him; in a few minutes he returned with the Trabant's cloak, rolled up as a bundle. Without uttering a word he knelt before his father, who, comprehending all the horror of his situation, placed his right hand on his son's head to bless him, after which Eli descended the stairs and stole quietly out of the house. His four children were a prey to indescribable misery. Ruth, fortunately, had sunk into a feverish sleep, and was not aware of her husband's departure.

Solomon's voice now broke the silence which prevailed. "Assist me, O my children," said the old man, rising from his seat;

and advancing to the centre of the room, he prostrated himself in prayer with painful effort. "Your father has often performed various afflicting offices for us, but never has he had such a dreadful burthen to endure as this. See how the timid partridge flies with terror before the unfeeling fowler! Behind each bush she hopes to find a shelter from the pursuit of her mortal enemy! It is the same now with your father, my well-beloved son! Anguish pervades his heart, terror paralyses his feet, death reposes in his arms; at this moment he is trembling with apprehension, that is why I call you around me. I would fervently appeal to the Eternal One and entreat Him to bow down His ear and to disperse our enemies, to preserve him on all sides, to be his stay, his support throughout this night of prolonged wretchedness."

* * * * *

At length Eli returned. Although the snowflakes were fast falling outside, he was

streaming with perspiration. The children in their joy surrounded their father, but he pushed them aside, and asked for water to wash his hands in accordance with the law of Moses. During this time Solomon with great fervour said, "Bless the name of the Eternal Lord, who in His great goodness has granted the supplication of his unworthy servants ; that you have come back without being discovered, after having executed your afflicting task."

Eli shuddered at the recollection of the dangers he had incurred. With trembling accents he said, "If I had been obliged to carry my own child to the cemetery, the path would not have appeared more grievous ; the nearer I approached the place of Christian sepulture, the more insupportable my burthen became. I crept up to the most solitary side, and I endeavoured to scale the wall. I might, certainly, have thrown the little Adalbert within the enclosure, but I wished to hollow out a grave for the poor

child. When I had managed to get to the top of the wall, I beheld the great field of the dead overlaid and surrounded with snow. I paused awhile, but took courage and dropped down into the cemetery. From time to time, whilst employed preparing a grave, I stopped to listen if anybody were approaching. All at once I saw a tall black shadow advancing towards me; I cannot say in the precipitation with which I fled, how I found myself out of the burying ground ; all I know is, that my hands were pierced and lacerated with thorns, no doubt from the bushes I must have grasped, the better to escape. However, thank God, I have arrived here without being discovered."

"And the cloak?" said Solomon, thoughtfully."

"It is lost," replied Eli ; "but that does not matter, it was not worth much."

"You do not understand me," said Solomon ; "inanimate object though it be, it may yet be brought forward as a witness against thee, and become thy denunciator."

"I do not fear it," said Eli. "No one saw me but God, my father; He knows my innocence, and will protect me."

"Selah," exclaimed his father, in a solemn tone.

With their hearts considerably lightened, young and old sought the repose they so much needed.





CHAPTER VII.

The Jews' Sabbath.

ELI, in his trepidation, had probably been alarmed by some high tombstone, which seemed to assume the shape of a man. The next day nothing was heard of the cloak, nothing was discovered; perhaps no one had bent his steps towards the retired part of the cemetery where it had been left. But the disappearance of the child had become the talk of all Munich: so much the more from his being the only son of a man of rank and influence. In the tavern which Filter frequented every evening, on that Saturday

the child's abduction was the theme of general remark and discussion ; and loud were the accusations and menaces against the Jews. "It is singular," said Master Filter to a blacksmith his neighbour, "that one person has his infant stolen, whilst another receives a child he never expected. That is what happened to me about five years ago, with that boy," pointing to Seppel, who was sleeping soundly on a bench. "Returning rather late from the brewery one November night, when I was about to enter the house I found a bundle just under my feet. I immediately cried out in astonishment, hearing cries proceeding from it. What on earth could it be? I quickly got a light, and discovered that a poor little child had been left at my door. He was a pretty little fellow, whose blue eyes seemed to implore pity and protection. As I had neither wife nor child, and sometimes felt lonely, my first thought was, This little angel arrives here ; it is God who has sent him, I will therefore adopt

him. Well, neighbour, this child surely brought a blessing with him. He is now the greatest source of consolation to me, and I would rather a hundred times forego my beer (and that is saying a great deal) than be separated from him. He is a favourite too with everybody. I am never obliged to buy him shirts, waistcoats, or shoes ; he receives more presents of clothes than are necessary. Even misfortune turns into good luck with him, as is proved by the danger he incurred lately in the corn-market. On that occasion a variety of gifts were sent which made him quite rich."

"Have you never sought to discover to whom he belongs ?" asked the blacksmith.

"I had not the least wish to do so," replied Filter ; "I was too happy to have him. Besides, when and how could I make inquiries ? At first I often spoke of the mysterious present I had received, but gradually I ceased to mention it, for evidently the child was not born at Munich."

"Did you never inquire of the child himself as to his origin? He seems very intelligent for his age. Perhaps his clothes, his linen, might have put you on the track."

"Not at all," said Filter. "First of all he spoke of his grandpapa, and of a great dog, spacious rooms, and of some inmate of the house, called Anselmo; but after much questioning one could make nothing of it all."

"Whoever abandoned him had a heart of stone," said the blacksmith; "and if you had not chosen to take him in, the poor little creature must have been frozen at your door."

"He must have been a bad-hearted man, undoubtedly," said Filter; "a man without religion or principle, to commit such an act; and perhaps the retribution which he merits has overtaken him, or will certainly do so later. But is it not time to return home? Eh, Seppel! wake up, wake up! you little sleeper! We must go home that you may

be able to rise early to-morrow, to take part in the Church service as chorister ; if you fail to attend, the sacristan will be displeased."

The mention of the sacristan had its due effect. Seppel opened his large blue eyes, rose up, and accompanied his adopted father.

Roused so suddenly from his sleep, the sharp, keen air made a disagreeable impression on him. He was thinking how comfortable his warm bed would be, when all at once Filter stopped.

"What do you require ?" said Filter sharply, whilst Seppel was walking onwards.

"Ah, good sir," said a supplicating voice, "I wish to beg a great favour of you."

"I have something else to do than to attend to you," said Filter, in an ill humour.

Upon hearing a well-known voice, Seppel came nearer, and recognised Zirl.

"Zirl !" he cried, "what are you doing here ?"

“ Oh, dear Seppel,” said the young Jewess, “ God be praised that I have met you ! A great affliction has befallen us ; my mother has had so many fainting fits, and is now so extremely ill, we fear she is dying. I have come here for a doctor, but though I have called out loudly, I cannot make him hear. Do assist me ! ”

“ Foolish girl ! do you not see the doctor’s bell ? ” said Filter.

“ Oh yes,” answered Zirl, “ I have already asked several passers-by to ring it for me ; but some were tipsy, and did not understand ; others insulted me, and passed by without the least pity.”

“ Why did you not ring it for yourself ? Have you need of a servant to do that for you ? ”

“ I do not dare to ring,” said Zirl, sobbing ; “ to-day is the Sabbath, and all labour is forbidden us ; besides which, the bell is of bronze, which is another reason why I dare not touch it to-day.”

“ Then you prefer to let your mother die !
Is that your filial love ? ”

“ Several times,” said Zirl, weeping, “ I extended my hand to the bell, and then withdrew it, fearing to bring down the anger of God upon us. I was placed in a painful position, between the observance of the Law and my anxiety and affection for my mother.”

Filter pulled the bell with so much force that he nearly broke it.

“ What an absurd law ! ” he murmured. “ This girl would rather let her mother die than touch a little bit of iron. ‘ O ye scribes and Pharisees ! ye strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel ! ’ ”

“ Who is that ? Who is that ? What is it then ? ” cried out the doctor from his window, alarmed.

“ Sir,” said Filter, “ pray come directly to the wife of the poor Jew Eli, who is dying, as her daughter informs us. She has come here to call you.”

The designation of "poor," which Filter with the best intention had added to that of Jew, completely failed in its object ; the doctor was reluctant to leave his house.

"Go about your business!" he replied, angrily, shutting the window.

"Well, we are no further advanced than we were," said Filter, regretfully. "The poor Jew has all the world against him, as well as his own Law ; but to this he nevertheless clings, and attaches himself to each minute observance of it, with a blind persistence, being thereby rendered miserable."

"Father," said Seppel, "why then can you not go to Zirl's mother? You know something of medicine, and how to heal sick people, for you cured me of the scarlet fever."

"Are you serious in wishing me to mount up all the stairs which lead to the Jewish family, instead of taking you home to your bed?" asked Filter with surprise.

"I have already slept enough," said

Seppel, "and I should not mind being up the whole night if we could help them."

Filter, conscious that he possessed some medical knowledge, repaired to a chemist to procure some drugs which he thought might be required. They then proceeded to the Jews' dwelling, and there found Ruth undoubtedly in a critical state. She gave but slight signs of life, the children were sobbing around her. Eli was snatching out his hair and his beard by handfuls, and by cries and caresses was endeavouring to bring his wife to life.

"Br-r-r-r-r!" ejaculated Filter, looking round; "it is dreadfully cold here." He felt the stove. "The stove is as cold as ice!" he said in a reproachful tone. "Eli, my friend, you really are very careless; your wife will die of cold. Have you no wood? or is it from idleness that you have no fire? Come! quick now, light a fire, the stove must be well heated. See, your old father is trembling with cold, and your children

seem quite benumbed. They look like death, with their blue lips and white cheeks. Light the fire, I say!" seeing that no one moved towards the stove.

"The Sabbath is not yet passed," said old Solomon, with chattering teeth.

"The Christian girl who works for us was here this morning, but is not yet return'd," said Zirl.

"I have no patience with you!" said Filter. "Then you cannot even light a fire in the stove on the Sabbath day? Why, what would become of us, if we were all of your persuasion? If you could not find a Christian to consent to be your servant, you would perish with cold, or be obliged to pass your Sabbath in your beds. 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.'"

"The Almighty," said Solomon in a serious tone, "blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on that day he reposed from all his work."

“I know it well, old father,” said Filter; “God reposed on the seventh day, that is to say, he ceased to create; but He did not repose from his work like a fatigued human being would do. The goodness of God never rests, never ceases, not a single instant, I tell you; if it did, we should all be lost, and the world would fall to pieces. If the mighty God did not sustain in their place on the Sabbath, as well as on other days, the sun, the moon, and the stars, what would become of us? Every moment God does what is necessary for the preservation of the world; and we also, on the Sabbath, may do what is necessary for the preservation of life.”

“Moses ordained that we should not do any work on the Sabbath day,” replied Eli.

“It is true that you ought not to traffic on that day,” said Filter, “nor undertake any work that you can do on other days; but you should conform to the spirit rather

than to the letter of the Law which kills. Besides, the Law was addressed to the children of Israel in Canaan, and not in a country where the land is often covered with snow, and where the rivers are frozen. If you cannot even light a fire, it is impossible to obtain boiling water. I wished to make an infusion of valerian, which would have a good effect on this poor sick woman."

Eli was undecided. "Father!" he said, in a supplicating tone. The old man replied with firmness: "These are the things which the Eternal One commanded should be done: thou shalt work six days, but the seventh shall be kept holy; whosoever shall work on that day shall be punished by death. Fire shall not be lit in any of your dwellings on the day of rest."

Eli was silent.

But Filter said, "It would be easier for me to control a wild horse than to persuade one of these obstinate Jews. Keep your Sabbath day as you please, although the un-

fortunate woman may die. But it seems to me that I hear fire crackling in the stove. Oh, Seppel, you are a good boy (seeing that Seppel and Zirl were no longer in the room); whilst I lose precious moments preaching, you are acting according to my wishes." In fact, directed by Zirl, Seppel had cut the wood in small pieces, had lit the fire, and boiled the water, which he brought in with a brightened face.

Filter prepared a restorative, which he got the sick woman to swallow. After remaining two hours, during which time she slightly recovered, he thought of returning home. Observing that the window-panes were no longer frozen, and that a genial warmth was diffused through the apartment, he said to Solomon, "Well, old father, look at these children, they are now no longer benumbed with cold, and you are indebted to the principles of Christianity for the removal of scruples which impede the employment of means necessary for your daughter's

recovery. Her illness proceeded from her not having taken anything warm during the day, which, moreover, she has been obliged to pass in an icy cold room."

Thereupon Filter and Seppel, having afforded all the assistance in their power, took leave of the family.





CHAPTER VIII.

The Involuntary Listener.

DHREE days after Filter's visit to Eli's family all Munich was astir. The little corpse of Adalbert von Landau had been found, and was to be interred as became his father's rank. An immense crowd joined the funeral procession ; and woe betide the Jew who should be met in the streets that day! he would certainly be put to death by the exasperated multitude. The captain, so keenly wounded in his dearest affections, was implacable against the authors of his son's death. He promised a

large sum to whoever should discover the murderer. Every one sympathised with the bereaved parent, and wished to assist him in the search, stimulated also no doubt by the recompense offered. Master Filter, accompanied by Seppel, shared in the general curiosity of those who wished to see the procession pass. "Comrade," said one of his friends, "if we could only be so fortunate as to find the murderer of the poor child, we would fraternally share the recompense."

Filter shook his head. "It would be the price of blood, and would bring no good with it. Although I should well know how to lay out the money, I prefer to obtain it in some other way."

His comrade laughed at such scruples. "Well, I do not see any great harm in receiving it, even though a dozen Jews were to be sacrificed. It seems clear that it is they who have killed the poor child, in order to have his blood, which they use in the performance of one of their detestable religious

rites. No doubt they had good reason to choose precisely our captain's child. He had been severe with them, and they have taken signal revenge. One knows very well that they have often poisoned wells, and committed other atrocious acts ; that is why I should not hesitate to accept the reward joyfully, if I could but succeed in obtaining it."

"They ought to be on the track of the murderer on account of the cloak in which the child was found," said a woman, joining in the conversation.

"That is something, at all events," said Filter's comrade. "The military cloak resembles those worn by the Trabants of the prince, in consequence of which, all the Trabants have been interrogated ; and thus they have discovered its former possessor, who declares that it had been sold to a Jewess. On the representation and guarantee of the captain himself, however, the suspected person was immediately released.

It was Kochler, the son of Frau Siebert's sister, whom you know."

"Kochler is a worthless fellow, of whom no one speaks well," said Filter, thoughtfully; "besides, his sister was the child's nurse: this revelation makes the affair look very serious."

"It appeared serious to the judge," replied his comrade; "and I repeat that it was only through the captain's interference that the Trabant owed his release."

"Was it in Kochler's power to describe the Jewish woman to whom he sold the cloak?"

"Certainly; it was to Eli's wife."

"What! do I hear rightly?" said Filter, much astonished—"to the wife of Eli?"

"To the mother of Zirl?" said Seppel, with trepidation.

"From the first examination she fell so dangerously ill that her life was despaired of. She acknowledged having bought the cloak, but said that she sold it immediately to some person unknown to her. As she is

undoubtedly seriously ill, they have contented themselves with arresting her husband, who, no doubt, is the chief culprit in this affair ; but he persists in denying the justice of the accusation, notwithstanding which they have already bastinadoed him."

"Poor Zirl!" said Seppel ; "I am sure this affair will cost her many tears, and her eyes will again suffer. And her good mother, Ruth ; let us go, father, and give her some more valerian, that she may not die."

"What does that little chatterer say ?" asked his comrade.

"He spoke of the Jewish family, whom he has often visited. You must know that the Jew Eli saved Seppel's life, and the lad has felt grateful and taken great interest in them all ever since."

"Let him be careful what he is about," said the man. "The Jews always begin by cajoling their intended victims, that they may fall the more surely on them."

Before Filter had perceived his absence,

sorely distressed at what he had heard, Seppel had let go his hand and disappeared. Filter imagined that he had gone to the Jewish family to question Zirl ; nor was he wrong in his conjecture.

He found the whole family steeped in misery and despair. The mother continued in a state of unconsciousness; the old grandfather struck his breast and pulled his hair. Eli was in prison ; the children sobbed. Seppel endeavoured in every possible way to console them, but did not succeed. Weary, sad, and hungry he returned home, but found the door shut. Filter was probably taking refreshment at a neighbouring beerhouse. He therefore continued to walk on, without any fixed object, his eyelids weighed down with drowsiness.

Soon he arrived at Frau Siebert's well-known house. Although he could not see any light shining through the window, the door being ajar, he gently pushed it open. He heard the old dame snoring near the

stove, behind which, not wishing to disturb her slumbers, he ensconced himself. Her garments were hanging up near him ; they served partly as a screen and partly as a covering to the poor benumbed boy. He soon felt the benefit of the warmth diffused around, and sank off to sleep. But he woke up suddenly ; a bright light penetrated through the curtain of clothes suspended round him. He heard the voice and the footsteps of a man pacing up and down the room in angry discussion with Frau Siebert. He recognised her nephew, the Trabant Kochler. Curiosity now got the better of his drowsiness.

“ I thought that I managed very cleverly to get myself out of the affair,” said the soldier, “ by placing the dead infant inside the Jewess’s bundle. She had laid it down a moment before the door of my room, whilst bargaining the price of a doublet with one of my neighbours ; but in my hurry I did not remember the cloak which served as a covering.”

“I was in great anxiety when I heard that you were summoned to appear in a court of justice,” said Frau Siebert. “Everybody at the market was asking me what had happened.”

“Nonsense!” said Kochler. “Though at one time it seemed, through that confounded old cloak, that the whole business would be revealed, I succeeded in throwing suspicion off myself, and caused it to rest on the Jew; but if I had not had the captain on my side the affair might have terminated badly for me. The judge was a sly old fox, and asked me many impertinent questions, without allowing me time to think of my replies.”

“It would have killed me to have been so questioned,” said his aunt; “and I certainly should have confessed all that I knew on the subject.”

“Oh!” said Kochler, “great firmness is necessary when one is placed on an anvil. It was fortunate that my sister was not examined as lengthily as I was; she might

perhaps have let fall some little word which would have caused our condemnation."

"But how came it that your captain, who is always so disagreeable, caused you to be set at liberty?" asked Frau Siebert. "Were you able to convince him that you were innocent, or rather to persuade him that you were?"

"The captain!" said Kochler, contemptuously. "I hold him fast, and he must dance to the tune I whistle. A single word from me sufficed to make him befriend me."

"Another person may believe that," said Frau Siebert, "but not I. You must indeed be a conjuror to accomplish that feat. But what did you really do to render the wicked captain favourable to you?"

"Hem!" said Kochler, bridling up. "You must know that I once did him a service, a service for which he could never repay me. If I were only to speak out, the captain would hang down his head abashed.

Truly, it is a most singular circumstance as regards his child. I might say that he had only reaped what he had sown ; only what he did was by design, whereas what I did was by accident, and without any evil intention. Was it possible for me to know, when I threw my cloak on your bed, that the child was there ? ”

“ But still, I do think that it is very unjust that you should have dragged the innocent Jew into trouble.”

“ What ! ” cried Kochler. “ Jews do not deserve better. The whole race are not worth a kreutzer ; and less than all, that Eli ! that thief, that rascal ! ”

“ It is not true ! ” cried Seppel, sharply, from his hiding-place. At these words Kochler and the woman stood aghast, and were immovable as statues.

“ You ought to be ashamed to utter such falsehoods ! ” said Seppel, disengaging himself from the clothes by which he was partly covered. “ It is to Eli that I owe my life !

He is a good man. It was by your carelessness that the captain's child was suffocated! What made you place him in poor Ruth's bundle? Why did you not go voluntarily and state the truth?"

The Trabant had not been so put down even when he appeared before the judge, as he was now by little Seppel, who spoke so openly and decidedly of an affair, the disclosure of which would place his life in danger.

"Another appendix to this fine history! Who, then, are you, bird of evil augury!" continued Kochler in a violent tone, advancing toward Seppel with menacing gestures.

"It is Seppel, the adopted son of Master Filter," said Frau Siebert, trembling. "You have often seen him here."

"Yes, yes, I remember!" murmured the Trabant, his eyes gleaming savagely. "It is the same child who I ought some years ago . . . Ah, why did I then only half perform my mission, and not do as I was

ordered? I should thereby have avoided this new trouble."

"What is the meaning of the words you are uttering?" asked his aunt in secret terror.

"Nothing more," replied the Trabant, "but that I shall be obliged to accompany this young man home. Come," said he to Seppel, taking hold of his hand. "It is already late, and your adopted father must surely long since have returned."

"Andreas! you have no good thoughts in your mind about this child!" said Frau Siebert, much alarmed. "I shall not let him go with you. Seppel shall not leave this room but over my body!" Saying which she placed herself before the door.

"Well, it might be so!" replied the Trabant, unconsciously placing his hand on his sword, with a savage look; but suddenly affecting great calmness, he said in a measured tone, "You had better continue, I think, to raise your voice, so that your

neighbours may learn our secret. Have I the look of an ogre that you deem me capable of such a bad action? Since such thoughts possess your mind, I will leave my sword here." He placed it near the stove. "It is true," he said in an undertone, "that by the boy's listening he became aware of an affair not exactly suited to a child's ears; but still he knows nothing for certain. It will not be difficult for me, as we are walking along, to extract a promise from him not to say a word of what has passed. He is gifted with intelligence beyond his years, and I have never heard he was a chatterbox."

"Andreas," said Frau Siebert in a solemn tone, "I hold you responsible for the life of that child; and I will assuredly go and reveal all if you do him the least harm."

"Don't agitate yourself, aunt," said Kochler, grimly laughing. "I do not mean to shed his blood, nor to harm him. I simply wish to constrain him to be silent; and to reconduct him home, nothing more."

Uttering these words in a double sense, the Trabant left his aunt's house with Seppel. She did not feel at all tranquillized by his assurance. She walked up and down her little room, wringing her hands and foreboding evil. Seppel also, doubtful of the man he was obliged to follow, resolved to take the first opportunity of running away ; but the treacherous Trabant did not allow him to put his intention into execution.





CHAPTER IX.

Conflict between Good and Evil.

WHEN Seppel and the Trabant arrived at the end of the street, the latter inquired, "Is Master Filter your father?"

"No," replied Seppel.

"I thought not; but do you not know who your parents are, and how you arrived at his house?"

"He says that he found me one evening before his door."

"That is true—that occurred several years ago. Have you no recollection of what happened before that?"

"It all appears like a dream to me," said Seppel, seriously.

"Have you completely forgotten the old gentleman who used to call you his dear Joseph? You called him 'grandpapa'—and, indeed, he was really so."

"I remember him very well," said Seppel, much interested.

"Do you not remember the Prior? a man with a long brown robe, who used to sup with him every evening?"

"Oh yes, I do!" cried Seppel; "he often brought me coloured pictures."

"And Anselmo? the old servant in green livery, who sounded the horn, put you on a horse, and made you canter round the courtyard of the castle? Have you forgotten all that?"

"Oh no! all comes back to my memory; also the big dog Nero, who liked to lie in the sun."

"Yes, dear Seppel, you are the child of rich people, of persons of high rank. Your

parents are dead, but your grandfather still lives. You are his legitimate heir; your proper name is Joseph Von Landau, and the captain is your uncle. It was he who, jealous of your rich inheritance, which he desired for himself, wished to get rid of you, and to effect your removal promised a large reward to one of your grandfather's servants if he would at once cause your death. The servant contented himself with placing you before Master Filter's door, and assured the captain that you had been torn to pieces by a wolf, which fable your grandfather still believes. The servant never dared to reappear before him, for they persuaded him that he also had met his death in the same way as the child. The captain has now lost his only child, for whom he committed this dreadful crime. But in whatever manner this may turn out, would you not like to see your grandpapa?"

"Oh yes!" answered Seppel, "provided Master Filter might always remain my adopted father."

“Very well, only follow me, and you will soon see your grandfather ; also the Prior, Anselmo, and Nero. I will myself conduct you to them, for I perfectly know the road.”

The child walked on, absorbed in thought, holding the hand of his wily conductor ; the memory of former years filled his mind, so that he did not pay attention where he was going.

All at once the Trabant halted, and said in a harsh tone, “Make haste and say your prayers, child ; your Paternoster.”

These words roused Seppel to consciousness. On looking round he was terrified. The houses of Munich were far off ; he knew not where he was, excepting that he found himself on the bank of the Isar. The waters were at their height, caused by the melting of the snows ; huge masses of ice were carried along by the strength of the current, and hurtling against each other, the crash of their encounter resounded to a considerable distance. Seppel clung to the Trabant

with alarm. "Why do you wish me to say my prayers here? I like to say them at home before I get into my little bed."

"*There is thy bed!*" replied the Trabant, pointing to the river with one hand, and strongly seizing the poor boy with the other.

"Oh no! Jesus!" stammered Seppel convulsively. "Oh, Herr Trabant! you do not mean what you say—you are not keeping your promise."

"Pray!" repeated Kochler sternly. "Do not cry out, or I will precipitate you into eternity."

"Into eternity?" said Seppel; "and will you not have to go there one day yourself? Oh, think of two children killed by you!"

"Hold your peace!" said Kochler. "Words are useless; they serve no purpose. No other way is left me," he muttered to himself.

"But who forces you to do this?" asked Seppel; "it is certainly not the good God; neither would any man advise you to do so."

You promised your aunt not to shed my blood."

"And I will keep my word," said Kochler, sneeringly; "for it is the water which will shut your mouth for ever."

"Your aunt will discover it all! You will be obliged to kill her too, and then your sister, for she knows that you caused little Adalbert's death. But you cannot kill the good God! He will bring to light all that you have done."

Seppel, seeing that what he said was of no avail, began now still more earnestly to intreat the Trabant. Encircling his knees with his little arms, he said, "Ah, Herr Trabant, think what a great sin you will commit. I belong to the choir of Notre Dame; if you do anything bad, you will doubly offend our Lord, for I am in His service. I consent not to receive my inheritance, not to be rich, not to see my grandfather, Anselmo, and Nero—although just now I longed so much to do so—if you

will only not throw me into that cold icy water! And what would Master Filter say, who only yesterday bought me this new waistcoat? And your aunt? who will look after her shop while she goes to Vokel's brewery? And to-morrow I was to spend at Master blacksmith Rommer's, to play with his children! And Zirl, I promised to see her often while her mother was ill! O Lord Jesus, help me! And to-morrow I was to——”

“Not a single word more!” said the enraged Trabant. “Since you will not pray, it will not be my fault if you go headlong to the devil.”

A cold perspiration suffused Seppel's face. He took off his cap, and laid it beside him on the snow. He knelt down trembling, mechanically crossing his hands on his breast. “What prayer am I to repeat?” he asked. “I do not know which to say; I have lost my head.”

“Eh? an Ave Maria, or what you please.”

“ I do not remember anything now ! ‘Pater noster qui est in cœlis,’ ” he said, without comprehending the meaning of the Latin words, “Amen. Ah, I am not ready ! Do not throw me into the river yet ! Those foreign words do not comfort my heart !” He raised his face to heaven with earnest devotion. “ O Lord Jesus,” he ejaculated, “ I am to be thrown into that cold stream and die ! Oh, rescue me, I pray thee ! Gracious Lord, grant me Thy help !” He looked upwards fixedly ; his gaze sought to penetrate far, far into the clouded sky, hoping to find protection of his soul’s refuge there. The mist rose from the troubled waters, presenting varied forms and mystic images to his perturbed mind, his distorted fancy. His face soon beamed radiantly. “ He comes ! ” he cried in ecstacy. “ Do you see the glory shining round Him ? He comes ! There ! See, Herr Trabant ! He approaches nearer ! He extends His hand to bless us ! He points in the distance to

my grandfather's house. He regards us with compassion! He will pardon you your wicked thought, your cruel intention!" As Seppel's terror calmed down, he seemed to forget the danger of his position. In the same manner that he performed his functions as a chorister in the church of Notre Dame, he now chanted with a clear voice, "Soli Deo Gloria, Alleluia!" dwelling on the last word in prolonged tone, as he was wont to do in the liturgy of the Church. He inclined forwards, and made the sign of the cross.

Kochler was touched by what he saw and heard. The child's purity, his innocence, his earnest piety (so much in contrast with his own sinful life), affected him. Seppel had poured forth his soul to God in prayer. Could he hold commune with God in like manner? Were Heaven's gates closed against him?

Every man, even the most hardened, preserves in his heart (unsuspected perhaps by

himself) some fibre which an unintentional word or remembered scene may cause to vibrate, by which he is recalled to the love of goodness, the reverence of virtue. When Seppel had chanted the "Soli Deo," he had unconsciously touched that chord in the Trabant's heart. Strongly agitated, Kochler fell on his knees, and uttered a prayer of repentance. His mind glanced forward to the dreaded future, he implored forgiveness, he hoped for mercy of that unseen but omniscient God, whose precepts he had for so many years forsaken and contemned.

When Seppel rose from his knees he perceived the change in the expression of the Trabant's face. He said, "You feel that the Lord Jesus has pardoned you. Lead me on to my grandpapa's house, Herr Trabant, as you told me you would, and God will bless you."

The soldier's heart, stirred to its very depths, had relented, and had become like that of a little child. He wept bitterly.

Taking Seppel up in his arms, he embraced him, pressed him to his heart, and called him his guardian angel! He now zealously acceded to his wish to proceed.

The clock of Notre Dame solemnly struck the midnight hour when they put themselves *en route* for Von Landau's castle.





CHAPTER X.

The Suppliant.

HE longer I live," said the knight Von Landau one evening to the Prior (his constant guest), " the more I feel that this earth is not our resting-place. When I was young other subjects occupied my thoughts ; but now that my son and his wife are dead, and that a fatal accident deprived me of my grandson, their only child, I direct my eyes to heaven with increasing hope. I am like a decayed tree which has neither branch nor twig nor sap, of which only the bark shows signs of life.

During my long nights of wakefulness I am often seized with an ardent desire to behold the cherished beings from whom Death has separated me; and I cannot help wishing that the axe may soon be laid to the root of the old tree."

"That is not a Christian wish," remarked the Prior; "you know that the axe is laid to the root of trees which do not bring forth good fruit. But you can bring forth, in your old age, fruit good and agreeable to God, therefore it is to be desired that you should remain yet a long time with us. 'Do not be weary of well doing,' says the Scripture, 'for in due time we shall reap, if we faint not.'"

"Alas! do I perform anything that may be likened to good fruit?" replied the knight. "I give to the needy a small portion of my superfluity, or I believe my peasants of some imposts. I should prefer bequeathing all my fortune to your convent, or to the poor."

“It is perhaps my duty to persuade you in favour of our convent, and to encourage you to bestow a gift on it, rather than to dissuade you from so doing; but we are rich enough: the enjoyment of greater abundance might be disadvantageous to us, as has often proved the case in other convents. Yet when I reflect that after your death your property will devolve on your nephew, the captain, at Munich——”

“Sir,” interrupted old Anselmo, opening the door, “there is a Jew here whom it is impossible to send away. He insists on speaking to you without delay. “Keep back, Jew! or I will set Nimrod at your heels.”

“Have pity on me, sir knight!” said a supplicating voice outside. “You yourself, gracious sir, gave me permission to address you if——”

“Let the man enter, Anselmo,” said Von Landau. Whereupon Jonathan, the brother of Eli, tottered in, in a state of great ex-

haustion. Scarcely had he advanced a few paces towards the knight than he sank down with fatigue. Extending his trembling hands, he said, "Sir, you are now the only person who has had pity on a poor Jew; that is why I left Munich to seek you. And I have walked day and night without intermission to come and speak to you. My feet are swollen and wounded, my eyes are dim, but now that I behold your gracious countenance, the bruised reed will revive, and the flame about to beextinguished will——" He paused to take breath. His appearance sufficiently attested the truth of his story; his whole person indicated the utter weariness of his body and the extreme tension of his mind. He had apparently aged more than ten years in the interval since the knight last saw him. So transformed was he by the anguish he had undergone, that had he not announced himself, the knight would not have recognised his *protégé* and former guest.

“ What dost thou require of me, unhappy man ? ” said Von Landau, touched with compassion at his recital. “ Dost thou want money? or canst thou not accomplish the Law by taking thy brother’s widow in marriage ? ”

“ The Lord has again grievously afflicted His people,” replied Jonathan. “ A servant, a menial without conscience, and her still more wicked brother, have accused us of the murder of a child. My brother Eli languishes in a dungeon ; his wife is on her deathbed. The enemies of our people would have sacrificed them both to their resentment, if the Prince (whom God preserve!) had not opposed their projects. But our adversaries have now raised a new storm against us. For three days a young boy has been missing, who, though of humble origin, was a favourite with everybody in Munich ; he is, therefore, still more regretted than the infant of the *Stadt Hauptmann*.”

“ What ! what are you saying ? ” cried

the knight, extremely surprised ; “ is my nephew’s son dead ? ”

“ He is indeed ; although my brother and his wife are perfectly innocent of his death. The nurse pretends that three men in the garb of Israelites took the infant forcibly away from her in the vestibule of her master’s house. Later the poor child’s corpse was found in the cemetery, enveloped in a Trabant’sold mantle ; notwithstanding which the Trabant to whom it belonged was set at liberty, whilst my poor brother, who is entirely guiltless, was consigned to a prison. The other boy, who was about eight years old the very day of his disappearance, was seen at my brother’s house, where he often went ; for he was good and amiable. They persist that the Jews have caused him also to be made away with ! Ah, sir, you are the uncle of the captain—of the man who makes the cruel edicts to which the Jews must submit. Oh find some means, I entreat you, to assist us, and be our defender

The enraged people threaten to massacre us, and our lives are not safe!"

"Here is an opportunity, sir knight," said the Prior, "to do more than to put your hand in your purse."

"It is true," said the knight, "I must go to Munich; although, after the death of my grandson, I made a vow never to set my foot out of my own domain. Anselmo, prepare for our departure; in the mean time, let the Jew be refreshed by a good meal."

"Sir," said Anselmo, re-entering the room, "there is somebody else wishing to see you, whose face is half concealed by his cloak. He will not tell me his name. A little boy is with him, who strangely reminds me of the dead master Joseph!" Here the old man wiped away the tears which started to his eyes.

The Trabant Kochler, accompanied by Seppel, appeared at the door. Whilst the former threw himself on his knees on the

threshold, the fearless and simple-minded child approached the spectators with evident curiosity.

“ This gentleman ought to be my grand-papa ! ” he said, pointing to the knight, “ and that one the Prior. Oh, I remember Anselmo with his green coat ; is it not so, Herr Trabant ? But I did not see Nero as I passed his kennel.” And he turned towards the kneeling man, who, with his hands raised, as though to implore pardon, had, by so doing, let his cloak fall, which had hitherto concealed his face.

The three personages whom Seppel had just named were thunderstruck : the knight especially. Joy and grief were contending for mastery, as indicated by the quivering muscles of his pale face. He stammered out, “ Can the dead come to life again ? Is this an illusion sent by the evil one ? Speak, Andreas ! is that really my child, my grand-child Joseph ? ”

“ Pardon ! pardon ! ” entreated Kochler.

“Sir, I wickedly deceived you. The garments found in the forest were purposely torn and stained with blood. It was by the order of your nephew, the captain, that I committed the crime. He told me to kill master Joseph, and he believes to this moment that his orders were obeyed, and that he is dead ; but I could not make up my mind to take his life. He has been well cared for ; and I now bring him back to you in good health. Pardon ! pardon !”

“Grandpapa !” said Seppel, in a winning voice, caressingly addressing the knight, “pray forgive him. I have already promised him your pardon. His heart is changed. During our journey he would not let me tire myself by walking, or we should earlier have arrived here.”

“Rise, Andreas,” said the knight to the repentant sinner. “You have caused me five years of anguish and bitter affliction ; however, the present moment makes amends for all. But that my villainous nephew——”

“He is already requited,” said the Prior. “The ways of the Almighty are inscrutable ; but His ways are just. It was no doubt decreed that Adalbert, for whose benefit the crime was committed, should die, and that your grandson, who was supposed to have been killed, should now be alive.”

The knight took the child on his knee, and gave him some wine. “Do you really remember me, and love me still ?” he asked, affection beaming from his countenance.

“Oh, indeed I do !” cried Seppel, joyfully. “I now remember everything here. Master Filter, my adopted father, will open his eyes with astonishment, and Zirl and Asher also, when I return to them with my old, or rather my new grandpapa.”

“Master Filter ! Zirl ! Asher !” exclaimed Jonathan, stupefied. “The man whose adopted child has just disappeared is called Filter, and Zirl and Asher are my brother’s children. Perhaps this young gentleman knows something about this lost child ?”

"I am Filter's adopted child!" said Seppel. "What! you are from Munich, and you do not recognise Seppel!"

"Praised be the Lord!" said Jonathan, "it is He who conducted me hither, to bring to light the falsehood of the accusation against our people. Oh, I assure you, sir, that it is not less certain that the captain's child was not taken away and killed by the Jews."

"I know that well!" said Seppel eagerly. "It was that Trabant there, who suffocated him with his cloak, and slipped him cunningly into Frau Ruth's bundle; and it was because I overheard him relate all that had occurred that he wished to throw me into the river Isar. Do not look so downcast," said the child, turning to the Trabant, "all has been forgiven you now that you have brought me safely to my grandpapa."

"Permit me, Von Landau," said the Prior, who had been attentively listening throughout these proceedings, "permit me to speak

to this soldier apart. He seems to have something on his mind which it is indispensable we should know to see our way clearly to the bottom of this affair." Thereupon, he led Kochler to the corner of the spacious apartment, where he listened to the soldier's confession.

Jonathan had thrown himself on his knees, and rendered thanks to God for the unravelling of the mystery relating to the murder of the child: a mystery which had worked such misery on his co-religionists and on his family.

"I think it expedient that you should go to Munich as soon as possible," said the Prior, after having heard Kochler's statement, "if you wish to prevent calamitous events. God grant you may yet arrive in time, before Satan and his confederates shall have caused the bad seed sown by the Trabant to bear pernicious fruit. It is necessary that you should take the Trabant with you as well as the Jew, and your grandson."

“In that case you will have the goodness to accompany me,” replied the knight. “You will serve as my counsellor and guide, for I scarcely know how to shape my course. You will be most useful to me when I find myself in the presence of my unworthy nephew.”

After a little hesitation, the Prior agreed to the knight’s request ; and immediately went to give orders, rendered necessary by his absence from the monastery.

Night had already fallen when the little *cortége*, composed of individuals so different in character and position, left the castle for the capital.





CHAPTER XI.

Popular Fury.

HE miserable dwelling of the Jew Eli offered an affecting spectacle. Ruth had died suddenly: an hour had scarcely passed before the official Jewish visitor appointed to verify her death arrived. After the necessary formalities were gone through, he declared that the unfortunate woman had ceased to exist, and ordered that preparations should be made for her immediate interment. The little room, according to the Israelitish custom, was soon filled with women, who,

for sordid hire, wept, lamented, and prayed ; and who, directly the coffin was brought, placed the dead body in it. During this time the children were grouped round the deceased mother ; sad and speechless, they looked so earnestly on that cherished form, as though to engrave it indelibly on their memory before she should for ever be removed from them. Zirl, who had her little sister Esther on her knees, had her eyes very red and inflamed ; those of the other children were scarcely less so from excessive weeping. The old grandfather, seated as usual in his corner, seemed not to take part in anything passing around him.

It was now the afternoon ; the sky was obscured by dark clouds, which rendered the apartment more sombre than usual. The interment was to take place in the evening, from a wish to avoid obtruding any Jewish religious ceremony on the notice of the Christians, on account of the extreme irritation of the populace against them.

Whilst waiting for the dreaded moment when their mother should be borne away, Deborah (the widow of Solomon's eldest son) entered breathless, and addressed her father-in-law in a harsh tone.

“Rouse thyself, old father! thy people have assembled in the synagogue, to deliberate on the means of escaping from the menaces and machinations of the Christians. Rise up, Solomon! go and speak for thy sons. Is it fitting that I, a weak woman, should open my mouth in public for them; that men should mock me? Thy first-born is gone like the first-born of the Egyptians; thy second son cannot do what he wishes; thy youngest the contemner of the Law of Moses, instead of becoming the support of the poor widow, has fled away no one knows whither, unmindful of the distress of his people! Come, old father, it is right that thy voice should be heard in the council of the elders. Do not remain always seated in this recess, without making some effort

to relieve us. Formerly thy opinion had great weight in the synagogue, so will it again have influence. Shake off this lethargy and bestir thyself!"

"For seven years past," answered the old man, "I have not put my foot beyond the door of this house; I am too feeble. And now that my soul is afflicted, do you think it is proper for me to appear amongst my people, who perhaps hardly remember the old blind Solomon?"

"Yes, old man; from your long absence your voice will have all the more authority in the council. I wish to accompany you. If your feet are feeble I will assist you, and Asher can support you on the other side."

"I must follow my beloved mother to her grave," said Asher in a firm tone.

Seizing the young boy by his collar and shaking him violently, the choleric widow exclaimed, "You ought to be called Absalom and not Asher. You know what is written of him who mocketh his father,

and who despiseth the teaching of his mother? Your mother is dead, and your father is imprisoned, I therefore am your mother, and this is your father," she said, pointing to the old man. "Help me directly to conduct him to the synagogue ; if not, I will show you who is master here ! "

Asher answered not a word, and did what she ordered him. Neither did Solomon make any further objection ; he allowed himself to be led out of the house, a task of no small difficulty. When the old man, who for so many years had not been exposed to the outer air, encountered it, he severely felt the sharp winter's blast ; but, urged on by the impatient woman, he was forced to continue his painful pilgrimage. When the trio arrived near the synagogue, groups of people stood about, making hostile demonstrations against the Jews approaching them. Solomon, with his long white beard and bent head, was spared insulting epithets, but the widow heard bitter remarks on her

covetousness and her usurious dealings. Asher also met with contumely, to which he replied by disdainful and scornful looks.

Immediately his grandfather entered the synagogue, Asher availed himself of the opportunity to leave it, and found a compact crowd outside. It was not without difficulty that he managed to force his way through the multitude of people, who gave utterance to threats against him. "One ought not to allow any of the Jewish race to escape," they said; "not one should be spared, for the children are already perverted, and are as bad as their parents." But Asher neither saw nor heard what was passing around him; his thoughts were with his mother, to whom he was about to render the last duties, and to bestow on her the last token of love and respect. He arrived at home just in time to witness the removal of her remains. Two poor Jews were preparing to carry away the coffin; the whole family were in tears. With bitter grief Zirl

regarded her little sister asleep on her lap, which prevented her joining her brother and sister in the procession. "You cannot go either, Jacob," said Asher to his brother. The poor child, himself conscious of his infirmity, obeyed without a murmur, and sat down on his little bench weeping bitterly by the side of Zirl, and leaning against her shoulder.

A cart with a wretched horse was before the door; the driver, who was not an Israelite, exacted a large sum for the service he was about to render. The bearers, the weepers, and the two children slowly followed. They who formed the humble procession felt their hearts relieved on finding their apprehensions of ill-treatment from the Christians were groundless. No one troubled them on their route; the streets through which they passed were deserted—a fact not to be attributed to the snow only, then falling in large flakes. Thus the procession arrived without interruption at the place of Jewish

sepulture, at a little distance from the town ; but the crowd outside the synagogue had collected in still greater numbers than when Asher was there, and formed an almost impenetrable wall of human beings, who were exciting each other to insult and ill-treat the Jews.

“ One cannot vent one’s anger by throwing stones against their windows,” remarked a citizen, “ for they take care to block them up.”

“ That would be too trifling a requital for their misdeeds,” replied another. “ Did they not mock and crucify our Saviour ? Did they not ask that His blood should be on them, and on their children ? Therefore we ought to stone them to death, or burn them alive, as the most wicked of all the heretics.”

These opinions met with general approval, and brought forth fresh manifestations of wrath.

The *Stadt Hauptmann* (town captain), at the head of a company of soldiers, sought

to make his way through the tumultuous crowd.

“What is the matter here?” he said in an unusually affable tone. “What is the meaning of all this assemblage of people?”

“The blood of Christian children who have been murdered cries aloud for vengeance, Herr Captain! Can we quietly allow that they should thus be put to death, one after another, by these detestable Jews?”

“Vengeance, vengeance!” cried several voices at once.

The captain shrugged his shoulders, and said, “Your gracious prince cannot persuade himself (however evident the fact may be) that the Jews are really the murderers of these children; therefore I, a poor heart-stricken father, must resign myself to bear that the murderer of his only son should go unpunished. The Jewish people know how to put on an appearance of great poverty; but, nevertheless, they manage, by distributing large sums of money,

to secure the support of powerful protectors; therefore I advise you to go home peacefully, that when our gracious prince shall return from the chase, he may not order his Trabants to disperse you, heedless of our complaint. Adieu, my children! think in your prayers of one from whom the Jews have snatched away all that was most precious."

"And Seppel also, Herr Captain," cried some women; "they have killed him also."

"Yes, good people," he exclaimed, affecting hypocritical grief; "Seppel was a child beloved by everybody: poor Seppel has also become a victim, and very likely, if they are not closely watched, his death will not be the last proof of their hatred to us; therefore, my children, be very quiet. It is only simpletons who are clamorous whilst carrying out their intentions." So saying, the captain and the soldiers departed.

"That dear captain!" said a woman; "how suddenly he has become mild and benevolent! Formerly pride prevented him

addressing a word to the common people. Trials and afflictions soften men's hearts, that is certain."

"But did you not well understand the captain's meaning?" said a man. "Get through your business quickly but quietly, before the prince's return from the chase."

These words spread rapidly, and, commented upon by the crowd, they gave rise to silent activity, which was all the more zealous and hurried, as night was approaching. Numbers of men and women, whose countenances betrayed fury, bloodthirstiness, and all evil passions, brought faggots, empty barrels, straw, tow, pitch, and tar, whilst others busied themselves constructing a barricade. The serried ranks opened to allow them to take their station near the synagogue. The two extremities of the street, whence the great concourse of people commenced and terminated, were strongly guarded.

"Form a chain by interlacing your arms,"

they called out, "and permit no one to pass, 'not even the prince himself. If he send his Trabants here, be firm as an impenetrable wall, until the purpose we have in hand shall be accomplished!"

Rarely was an order executed with so much willingness.

Suddenly a clamour arose. "A spy! A Jew! strike him down!" A piercing shriek followed these words; it was soon stifled, alas! under renewed blows.

This first victim of popular fury was flung on one side and left bathed in blood. Deeds of vengeance had begun, when suddenly two women forced their way through the crowd, uttering loud protestations. Upon hearing the increasing din and tumultuous uproar, they had hurriedly left their house, very insufficiently clad to resist the inclemency of the weather. They arrived breathless with the extreme haste they had made. These were Frau Siebert and her niece, nurse to the captain's child.

“What are you going to do to the Jews?” asked the former, with an expression of anguish painful to behold.

“We are going to supply them with a light by which they can better read their Law, and above all the sixth commandment,” replied a bystander in an ironical tone.

“For the love of Jesus and the Holy Virgin,” cried the girl, “stop! In the name of God, let us pass! The Jews are innocent of the death of the captain’s son!”

“Oh, we know better than you do how that is; and the captain also,” replied the man. “Do not disquiet yourself about the Jewish race. Their last hour has struck; and it is not you, poor women, who can arrest their doom, even though you cried a thousand times louder!”

“I am the nurse of the little child; and I call God to witness that I was partly the cause of his death,” said Nanny, wringing her hands.

“You ought sooner to have declared that,”

replied the man ; " now it is too late. Besides, it has yet to be proved whether you are saying the truth now, or whether it was the truth you stated previously. Now the first appears more than doubtful, for not only is it the captain's child, but Seppel also has disappeared."

" Yes," said Master Filter, who formed one of the links of the chain of human beings, " I was once well disposed towards the Jews, but since they have put my boy to death, I am as incensed against them as others."

" Holy Virgin !" said Frau Siebert. " It is not true that Seppel has been murdered by the Jews, I am certain of it. It was my nephew Kochler, the Trabant, who suffocated the infant with his cloak ; and he it is who has caused the disappearance of Seppel, also, notwithstanding that I threatened him that I would reveal all if any harm befel the lad when he took him away from my house. Let me pass, my friends ! Stop ! —for the love of God stop ! I say it again

and again ! Listen to me, I beseech you ! and repeat my words further on ! The Jews are innocent ! It is not the Jews who have killed the two children, but I, this girl, and her brother, are the guilty ones."

"Be silent !" said a citizen, incensed at her intrusion, "for what you say may bring you to the gallows ! It is too late now, and in every case it would be no great harm if all the Jews perished."

"But I cannot share that dreadful sentiment," said Filter seriously ; "and if these women speak the truth, I also shall raise my voice with theirs in crying out. Stop ! the Jews are innocent ! The murderers of the two children are discovered ! Halt !—halt there !" And the brave man continued loudly to vociferate.

Unfortunately, men often so prompt in doing evil sometimes remain supine when the performance of a good action is in question ; so was it now. The praiseworthy conduct of Master Filter met with no response,

and instead of finding ready agents to promote and promulgate the truth, his voice was borne down by the fury and clamour of evil-disposed men.

“ Let some one stop the mouth of that brawler by a good blow on his jaw, or we shall soon have the prince and his Trabants upon us.”

In vain was it that Frau Siebert, Filter, and the nurse made vigorous, nay, frantic, efforts to break through the living wall which encircled the synagogue ; the ill-will of the populace and their hatred of the Jews obstinately barred their progress.

“ The proverb is true, and is now exemplified,” said a peaceful spectator, seeing the useless struggles of the three associates ; “ ‘when a stone is recklessly thrown from one’s hand, it falls into the hands of the devil.’ The tongue of a woman is a little member, but Nanny’s thoughtless and far-spreading falsehood will to-day be the cause that a hundred innocent Jews will perish ! ”

Although repulsed with brutality, Frau Siebert and her niece, urged by remorse for their deceitful, wicked conduct, continued to make violent exertions to convince the crowd of the innocence of the Jews. Without noticing the insults they brought on themselves, they sought to penetrate into the synagogue. Their cries became more piercing, their gestures were those of despair.

All at once a dazzling light from the building illuminated the faces of the crowd. They hailed it with a shout of ferocious joy. To the hearts of the poor women it sounded like a funeral knell. The fire had caught the synagogue: the temple and the congregation within were doomed. Many fell down senseless. It were vain to seek to pourtray the pangs which assailed Frau Siebert's mind, a prey to agonizing remorse and frenzied despair.



CHAPTER XII.

The Burning of the Synagogue.

MORE than one hundred and fifty Jews were collected in the synagogue to consult together how they might prevent the disastrous consequences which the implacable hatred and vengeance of the Christians would bring upon them. Far from being rendered prudent by the gravity of their situation, to enter into a calm and dispassionate discussion, the Jews, as they were wont, all spoke at once ; and so much noise prevailed that no one could understand what his neighbour was saying. The popu-

lace outside were thereby enabled to make preparations for putting their horrible project into execution without awakening suspicion in those about to become their victims.

In the midst of many counsels it was surprising that no one was heard to propose that the Jews should quit a city where they had been ill-treated and were detested by the inhabitants, from whom they could expect only maledictions and offensive measures.

The turmoil within the synagogue had lasted a considerable time, without its being possible to come to any decision, when the widow of Barach, profiting by an interval of silence, cried out with all the strength of her lungs, "Men of Israel! listen to the humiliated widow of your brother Eli Barach. Despise not my words. Remember that Judith saved our people in a day of great distress. Ye wish to find the means of saving our nation? First ask yourselves why this trial afflicts the people

of God? Ye have despised the commands of God! that is why ye are delivered into the hands of the Christians ; just as our ancestors fell into the power of the Philistines. But I will be your Deborah, and save you! Listen with attention ! What does our Law prescribe? 'When a married man dies* without children, his brother shall take his widow, so that her name shall not be quite effaced.' Now my husband is dead, and the period of my mourning ended some time ago ; notwithstanding which, this old man's son has not yet offered me his hand ; thus he places himself in open rebellion against our Law. He has disappeared, leaving me, his legitimate betrothed, lonely and without support! Take heed, men of Israel, that in tolerating such conduct ye do not bring down on yourselves the terrible effects of God's anger. I accuse before you Solomon, here present. By his excessive indulgence he has drawn down upon us the misfortunes

* Deuteronomy xxv. 5-9.

which menace us! He has not exerted his parental authority to compel his son to accomplish the Law."

"Then it was for this," cried old Solomon with a trembling voice; "it was to accuse me publicly that my daughter-in-law forced me to come here, notwithstanding my feebleness and old age. Woman! why didst thou urge me to take my place amongst the council of elders, when thy intention was to bring shame on my white hairs? Thy deceit is equal to that of the serpent, who seduced our mother Eve!"

With her eyes flashing with anger, his quick-witted daughter-in-law interrupted the aged man. But a loud murmur of disapproval from the assembly hushed the widow's envenomed and rancorous words. She did not, however, allow herself to be intimidated. With increasing vehemence, whilst objurgations of her conduct were being uttered, a shrill, piercing voice was heard dominant above all others,—

"I offer two hundred gold guldens as the price of silence!"

Solomon's daughter-in-law had raised herself on a bench, and placed herself in a commanding position from which she pronounced these words. Her expedient succeeded: silence ensued; whilst three hundred eyes sparkled with avidity at the sight of the purse of gold which she held aloft above the heads of the assembly. She had triumphed, and made her triumph felt, by imposing implicit silence, so that her exhortation might be distinctly heard and attentively listened to.

But something extraordinary had occurred. Even Deborah's animation was hushed; a hissing, crackling noise, a crisp, snapping sound, like that which a boisterous wind makes when it bends and snaps trees in the forest, was heard. The impression made on the crowd was one of indescribable terror. Death was felt to be in the atmosphere around them. With their necks outstretched

they waited in terrible agony until the danger should be thoroughly revealed, the better to wrestle with their fate, whatever it might be. How long the moments seemed! They heard a crash of timbers giving way. A desperate energy now filled every mind. Deborah was the first to rush to the door. She sought egress: the door was closed and barred! She vainly endeavoured to burst it open with the strength of despair. Maimed by her almost super-human exertions she re-entered the assembly wringing her hands. Twenty Jews then tried to open the window-shutters; at length they succeeded. A red glare of light filled the hall, fierce tongues of flame darted up from the basement and from the court below: the fire seemed hardly to have gained the upper storeys. A moment of stupor followed the discovery of their terrible fate —the certain death awaiting and prepared for them! A long agonising cry of despair arose from these unfortunate beings, which

informed the excited populace that their plan of extermination was succeeding.

What pen can pourtray the terrible scene that followed, or repeat the expressions of fiendish exultation which broke forth in that supreme moment! The fire spread but too rapidly, every instant fresh objects fed its fury. When it had burnt some time, the beams, becoming detached, fell with a terrific crash, and the ceilings gave way. The situation of the Jews was inextricable and past relief. The heat became more and more insupportable. Flames darted from every opening, whilst the bewildered congregation sought the entrance court, hoping—at least for a moment—to find some sheltered spot in which to take refuge. The most energetic men seized a bench, to use it as a battering-ram against the blocked-up windows which looked into the street: Vain hope! not a stone was loosened by their unavailing effort. Deborah and two

companions, rendered almost mad by despair, precipitated themselves from a casement into the court below, which was filled with fragments and *debris* detached and scattered by the conflagration. By their rash act they rushed on a more speedy death.

The imprisoned Jews had now no hope ! No hope ! They stood facing death, and yet brimful of life, of sentient existence, in face of death ; able to reflect on it, to behold it surely approaching them nearer and nearer ; knowing and feeling that they could accomplish nothing to escape from it ; without hope for this life, and, perhaps, uncheered by hope for the life beyond !

In the midst of their cries, of the overwhelming dismay and confusion that reigned in the synagogue, Solomon alone remained calm and unmoved. He offered up prayer ; he thought of the three young Hebrews in the midst of the fiery furnace. At this

moment the garments of the Jews caught fire—agonizing sobs were heard, stifled groans, and then all was finished. The merciless, cruel deed was accomplished ; human suffering was at an end.





CHAPTER XIII.

Conclusion.

HE snow fell thicker and faster in the deepening gloom of evening, whilst the children were following the last remains of their mother to the tomb. The Jewish cemetery was situated at some distance from Munich, an old wall displaying several fissures surrounded it ; but it was so high that no one outside could see over it. Close to its entrance stood a shed wherein the corpse was deposited before its inhumation ; and where certain ceremonies, rendered necessary by Jewish

superstition, to open the gates of eternity, were performed : it was there that the lid of the coffin was to be nailed down.

The procession arrived noiselessly ; the attendant mourners, all white with snow, appeared like phantoms. When the coffin was taken off the truck, the two men who had borne it to the shed and the driver hastened to return to town. Then the gate of the cemetery was closed, and the weepers began to perform the ordinances according to their traditions relative to their dead.

The children went to pray near the last abode of their beloved mother. Arriving close to the grave, they beheld a white motionless form ; the sight inspired them with terror. When they screamed the form suddenly arose, and the drapery which enveloped her head having fallen off, disclosed a human being.

“ Ah, it is you, dear Sara ! ” cried the two children, in the midst of their sadness, pleased to see her. “ We did not know

what had become of you. You sympathise with us, and desire to be present at our dear mother's interment."

"I would wish to be laid with Ruth," she said, weeping bitterly.

"You are right," answered Asher, with emotion; "it is better to repose in Abraham's bosom than to live among Christians."

"We have no one to take care of us now," said Judith. "Father is in prison. Oh, if you would be our mother, dear Sara! Grandfather remains silent in his recess, whence he cannot stir."

"You are mistaken," said Asher, "grandfather is now in the synagogue."

Further conversation was interrupted. The two porters rushed in in a state of terror and bewilderment. "God of Abraham! Look! look!" they exclaimed; "what does that light mean?" Sara and the children turned their faces in the direction they pointed out, and beheld vast columns of

flame rising from the centre of Munich ; the buildings were projecting deep shadows far off. "O Moses and the prophets !" cried one of the men, " it is in the direction of the synagogue—it is the synagogue itself that is burning !" The other man called out, " Quick ! let us run to the synagogue!"

At this cry every one left the cemetery. The hired mourners wrung their hands in despair when they beheld the conflagration rapidly increasing every moment. In the midst of their sobs they ejaculated, " My father !" " My son !" " My husband !"

Remembering that their nearest and dearest relations were to form part of the congregation that evening, they fled swiftly onwards to the city. The porters had already gone some distance. Asher followed them, reflecting on his poor grandfather's probable fate. Sara and Judith approached the shed where the coffin was placed ; a loaf of bread was by its side. Asher soon after reappeared. " It was impossible for me

thus to abandon our dear mother," he said, mournfully seating himself by the side of Judith and Sara. " Grandfather is with Deborah, who will be much better able to assist him than I can."

The three then patiently waited for the return of the grave-diggers and the hired mourners.

The snow had ceased to fall, but the sky was obscured with heavy clouds: the cold became intense. The fire shone like a beacon far off. Gradually its light became fainter and fainter, then died away.

" Do you think," said Asher, " that it was the Christians who set the synagogue on fire? When I was taking grandfather there they were uttering dreadful threats against our race. But it is getting late; no one seems to be coming back. I think we had better go home now, and return here early to-morrow morning. We will place the lid on the coffin and close and secure the shed."

The poor children, whose teeth were chattering with cold, consented, not without grief, to abandon their mother's remains.

All at once they heard a continuous sound of approaching wheels. Asher looked out and perceived a carriage, accompanied by four men on horseback, advancing slowly by the side of the cemetery. As it drew near he heard a voice say, "It is very strange we have missed the road into the town. It is difficult to know where we are ; the snow and the darkness made us lose our way ; and the fire which we thought would light us to Munich has misled us still more."

"All that God does is well done, be assured," replied another speaker in the carriage. "Who knows but that our divergence from the right road may not lead to some good result which now escapes our feeble senses ; in every way it increases our desire to find an inn with a warm room, and to partake of a good supper."

"I cannot discover any habitation near,"

said the former speaker (in whom, no doubt, the reader has recognised the good knight Von Landau). Putting his head out of the window, and seeing Asher, he asked whether there was any house near.

“This is only a small shed which belongs to our Jewish cemetery,” said Asher. At the same moment a youthful voice from the carriage window exclaimed, “Is that you?”

Asher was petrified with astonishment. “Without doubt I am Asher; but who are you?” he asked.

“I am Seppel,” was the reply. Upon recognising Asher’s voice, Jonathan left the carriage, and leading Asher forward, said, “Sir knight, this is the son of my brother Eli; that is our cemetery; and now I know my way into the town. But, Asher,” he said with surprise, “what are you doing here?”

“My poor mother died at twelve o’clock to-day, and we were preparing the funeral ceremonies when a fire in the town broke

out, and our people, believing that it was the synagogue that was burning, ran off to ascertain the fact. You see me here because we were waiting their return. Our grandfather was in the synagogue, as well as the greatest part of our people. God grant that they have not all fallen victims to the conflagration ! This evening the Christians were making fierce threats against us." Asher had said the last words in a low tone, but the Prior had overheard them.

"Good God!" he exclaimed, " did you say that your mother died to-day at noon, and you wish to inter her already this evening ? Could you not have waited three days even ? Would not that have been time enough to get rid of your mother ? "

"Our Law exacts from us that we should not have the dead more than nine hours above ground," replied Jonathan, hesitatingly. "As long as the dead are not buried evil spirits have the power to torment them in various ways."

“ Oh, is it possible to entertain such a barbarous and criminal belief ! ” said the Prior, justly incensed. “ How can you thus expose human beings—brothers in faith—to the risk of the most dreadful of deaths, that of being buried alive ! What fearful anguish may not this frightful superstition already have caused ! If Christianity obtained for me no other advantage than that of not being buried alive, I should welcome it. I earnestly hope that no human beings have perished at the conflagration ; but I would infinitely rather be burnt than be buried alive.”

They proceeded onwards to the town. As Jonathan, Asher, and Judith walked behind the carriage, a closely veiled companion silently followed them. When Jonathan learnt from the children that it was his betrothed he was startled and surprised. Pausing a moment, he extended his hand to her, and said in a decided, earnest tone, “ Sara, here is my hand, I will never marry my

brother's widow ; my doing so cannot be the will of God, as the elders pretend. If I did not immediately decline, it was out of regard for my old father ; but now, whatever may be the result, I am decided that I will never marry Deborah."

Sara gave him her hand without uttering a single word. They all soon reached the town. When they arrived at the wooden bridge which unites the two banks of the Isar the servants got down and led their horses by the bridle ; the carriage advancing slowly. The *cortège* was passing noiselessly when they perceived near the centre arch two women clasped convulsively in each other's arms, as if awaiting an opportunity of throwing themselves over the side of the bridge unobserved. Another moment's delay, and all would have been over. They were suddenly seized by vigorous arms and firmly held back from the fate they were seeking.

The two women were Frau Siebert and

her niece Nanny. Tormented by remorse for their crime, their consciences did not allow them any respite. These inconsiderate and unfortunate women thought that suicide would end their sufferings. They imagined that they would find repose in death. Alas ! they had not reflected on the enormity of the sin they were about to commit.

When the two women had been rescued from their peril, they related with sobs of despair the fiendish motive which had caused the Christians to set fire to the synagogue, based on the pretended murder by the Jews of the two children, Adalbert Von Landau and Seppel. This news produced a cry of consternation and grief from the Jews present, which found a ready echo in the hearts of the Christians accompanying them. As for Kochler, so lately awakened to the flagrancy of his crime, the intelligence inflicted such a sharp pang of remorse and distress that he was on the point of putting an end to his existence.

The good Prior had attentively observed all that was passing. At length he addressed to them a few words of comfort and of warning : " By casting the suspicion of the murder of the captain's son upon the Jews you gave to Satan a little bundle of tow, which he quickly seized, and wrought a net with it by which one hundred and fifty Jews perished ! However, it is not Judas Iscariot in his despair you should imitate, but Peter repentant, who, by an increase of love for his Saviour and for his brethren, sought to repair his error. Live, that you may ever deeply repent your wicked intention of throwing yourselves into the Isar." Thereupon he consigned them to the care of the three servants, and then invited the rest of the company into a good hostelry, where, by the knight's directions, they were amply supplied with refreshment, of which they stood in great need.

Von Landau, accompanied by the Prior and Seppel, repaired to the prince's palace,

and had a long interview with him ; the result of which was that the captain of the guard received his dismissal that very night, with orders to quit Bavaria at once and for ever.

The fire had ceased, but the synagogue was entirely consumed. The populace, upon learning the return of the prince, had dispersed, so that tranquillity was restored throughout the city, broken only by the regular but heavy tramp of the Trabants, posted as sentinels in every direction.

Meanwhile poor Zirl experienced great mental distress. Her brother Jacob was slumbering ; she had succeeded in lulling little Esther to sleep ; and being unoccupied and left entirely to the poignancy of her own thoughts, her anxiety at the absence of her relatives increased every moment. Although she knew nothing of the burning of the synagogue, she vaguely felt that some dreadful calamity must have occurred to keep them so long absent. The ferocious

threats which the populace had addressed to the Jews recurred to her every time her eye fell on her grandfather's vacant chair. The flickering light of the feeble lamp scarcely lit the dark chamber. The poor girl felt herself so completely abandoned, so alone in the world, that she gave way to torrents of tears. At last a noise on the stairs fell upon her ear; steps were approaching. She thought, perhaps these are Christians coming to finish their work of extermination. She buried her head in her hands and waited with resignation.

In a moment the door opened. Zirl looked up, and with inexpressible joy saw Seppel with a light in his hand, followed by Asher; Judith, Sara, Jonathan, and Master Filter; her father Eli also, who by the prince's command had been set at liberty. Three strangers accompanied them, Von Landau, the Prior, and Anselmo. Von Landau, with much emotion, said, "A great calamity has this day befallen the

Israelites by the loss of their temple ; permit me, friends, for the future to replace your good old father Solomon. May it please God that Seppel and I may have it in our power to render your life happier than it has hitherto been, and to prove to you what true Christians are ; and that your descendants may one day unite with us in glorifying His Son the Saviour."

The knight and Seppel have performed their promise. The Israelites have received benefits at their hands, and have cause to bless the day when they first became known to them. Often Eli and his family exclaim with a sigh, " If all Christians resembled our friends then might we be persuaded to change our religion for theirs."

Master Filter lived to a good old age and always received kindness from the grateful Seppel. Happy and contented, during his life, he softly fell asleep in eternity.

As to the three guilty persons, they did

not suffer from human justice, but they never experienced real happiness. Remorse for their crime, like a dark shadow, followed them throughout the rest of their lives.

THE END.



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